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FRONTEX EVALUATION REPORT 2014

Joint Operation Coordination Points 2014

Operations Division
Joint Operations Unit
Land Border Sector

Approved at Warsaw
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.....
Signature

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ANNEX:

Observation of Fundamental Rights Officer

Operational activity number:

Prepared by:

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Director of Operations Division:
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1. Background information

1.1. Brief risk assessment

The JO Coordination Points 2014 represents a continuation of the operational activities implemented within the Project Coordination Points 2013 and it was implemented with the aim of establishing a system for collecting and exchanging information between third countries, EU member states and Frontex, which enables the early detection of irregular migration flows that might have an effect upon the EU/SAC external borders. In this regard, operational activities were implemented at:

[REDACTED]

At the **Albanian-Montenegrin border** during the period under review, 23 persons were reported within the operational area of the JO Coordination Points 2014 in 18 incidents. Most of these persons were linked to refusal of entry incidents (13 incidents/15 persons). The number of incidents related to irregular migration was very low (i.e. one illegal border-crossing incident involving the apprehension of two Syrian migrants); in addition, the number of cross-border crime related incidents was also very low (i.e. one smuggling of goods incident and one stolen vehicle incident).

At the **former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border** during the reporting period, 583 persons were reported [REDACTED] in 276 incidents. Nearly 78% of these persons were linked to refusal of entry incidents (456 persons), followed by persons reported for overstay (31 persons) and persons reported for falsification of documents (22 persons). Serbian nationals were chiefly reported for refusal of entry and overstay, while the incidents related to the falsification of documents were primarily linked to nationals from Syria, Kosovo¹ and Albania.

Nearly 60% of the migrants apprehended within the operational area of the JO Coordination Points 2014, were reported [REDACTED] and the main nationalities of the apprehended migrants were Albanian, Syrian and Turkish. Additionally, 14 persons were arrested for being involved in smuggling activities and 3 stolen vehicles were detected.

At the **Moldovan-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Moldovan border**, a total of 105 incidents involving the detection of 189 persons were reported within the operational area of the JO Coordination Points 2015. The highest number of incidents was reported from the [REDACTED]

Most persons were reported for overstaying (75 incidents). In addition, 54 incidents related to persons being refused entry while 52 incidents related to other types of incidents. The main nationalities of the detected persons were Moldovan (101) and Russian (54).

The number of illegal border-crossings recorded at this border section was very low (6 Moldovans and 1 Russian) and all irregular migrants were apprehended within the [REDACTED]. During the reporting period, 23 irregular migrants were apprehended and 4 facilitators were arrested within the operational area of the JO Coordination Points 2014. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border ranked first in terms of migrant apprehensions, followed by the Moldovan-Ukrainian border and the Albanian-Montenegrin border. The main nationalities of the apprehended migrants were Albanian (6), Moldovan (6) and Syrian (6).

¹ 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.

Commented [A1]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the operational area. Its disclosure would expose law enforcement officials' patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations in the same area, and thus facilitate 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.

1.2. Operational aim

The operational aim of the Joint Operation Coordination Points was to establish a system for the exchange of information related early detection of recent, actual and future illegal migration trends towards the EU through the territory of the third country. Furthermore, the establishment and exchange of common best practices improved practical cooperation between the competent authorities involved in controlling of irregular migration flows and to tackle other cross-border crime.

1.3. Period of implementation and operational areas

The joint operation was implemented during the period 08 April - 16 December 2014. The deployment periods and operational areas were as follow:

1/ Land border between the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia: [REDACTED]

Commencement	8 April 2014
Termination	16 December 2014

2/ Land border between Moldova and Ukraine: [REDACTED]

Commencement	1 July 2014
Termination	31 July 2014

3/ Land border between Albania and Montenegro: [REDACTED]

Commencement	8 July 2014
Termination	2 September 2014

1.4. Participants

The joint operation was hosted by the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Albania, Ukraine and Moldova with participation of 12 MSs and SACs, namely Austria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Netherlands, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Switzerland. Each MS participate with one authority.

Regarding the number and profiles of the experts deployed within the joint operation, there were 32 advanced level document officers and 5 stolen vehicles detection officers.

1.5. Financial information

Final budget: EURO 230,000.00

Total commitment: EURO 242,599.15 with 31 numbers of SFD issued

Payment consumed: EURO 165,247.00 consumption 91.88 % (consumed budget*100/committed funds (EURO 179,856.93) with 28 final payment issued until 12.01.2015)

2. Achievement of objectives

Enhance border security / Enhance efficiency of border security

The objective **has been achieved**. During the implementation of the joint operation a significant number of document and stolen vehicle experts from twelve Member States have been deployed as Observers to Third Countries, namely to Albania, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova and Ukraine. They were used in most efficient way supporting the Third Countries national authorities in performing border checks at selected BCPs.

During the implementation period of the JO Coordination Points 2014, a total of²:

- 23 irregular migrants were apprehended: [REDACTED];
- 13 persons were detected at the [REDACTED] for abuse of travel documents;
- 11 persons were involved in the smuggling of goods;
- 4 stolen vehicles were detected [REDACTED] (1).

The deployment of document experts and stolen vehicle experts at the BCPs where the joint operation was implemented, proved to be very beneficial not only in strengthening the border control system at the BCPs by supporting the local authorities with specialised staff, but also in enhancing the exchange of expertise between the deployed EU experts and the local officers, which further enriched the knowledge of both parties (local officers and EU experts).

Enhance exchange of information / Enhance efficiency of the exchange of information

The objective **has been partially achieved**. The insertion of data into JORA system was in many cases in timely fashion and accurate, but there were also cases when the exchange of information was unsatisfactory because of the delays in the incident reporting and/or because of the improper filling up of information to JORA Template.

Identify possible risks and threats

The objective **has been partially achieved**. The data collected during the operational period was primarily quantitative and consisted mainly in statistical data reported through JORA. The lack of debriefing experts deployed within the operational area, as well as due to lack of intelligence officers appointed by the host member states hindered the data collection process and limited access to information regarding routes and modi operandi used by irregular migrants to reach the EU. Focused on media monitoring, as well as communication with the Local Coordinators and the EU experts deployed in the area, were employed to fill the intelligence gaps regarding irregular migratory flows affecting the operational area, but the resultant information remained limited.

3. Link to other Frontex activities and best practices

JO Focal Points 2014 Land

The EU experts deployed in the area were acting as a contact persons for the Guest Officers deployed in other Frontex coordinated operations as well as for the hosting third countries authorities. The support given from Joint Operation Focal Points 2014 Land was highly appreciated and proved to be a useful tool in case of information exchange. High level of cooperation and exchange of information between involved partners were expressed by all stakeholders concerned.

Useful practical link between local coordinators was initiated during the common local coordinators meeting, which was held in Warsaw on June 2014. Local coordinators of JO Focal Points Land and JO

² Only the operational results linked to irregular migration and cross-border crime were included here

Coordination Points had a chance to meet each other and discuss about the cooperation during the implementation of the operational activity.

4. Assessment of joint operational activities

4.1. Supporting Response

4.1.1. Operational concept

Assessment of implementation of the operational concept in accordance to Operational Plan

According to the Operational plan, activities during the JO Coordination points 2014 should enhance the operational cooperation between Member States and Third Countries involved. In order to facilitate operational cooperation, Frontex ensured coordination of actions implemented by Third Countries. Activities implemented within the framework of the operation promoted European border management standards and facilitated exchange of experiences and expertise in Integrated Border Management. Coordination Points were established at the Border Crossing Points between Third Countries and deployed EU experts acted as observers at Coordination Points. EU experts were also acting as contact persons, both for guest officers deployed in other Frontex coordinated operations and their national authorities as well as for the involved Third countries law enforcement agencies. Based on request formulated by the local authorities, EU experts provided practical field training to staff concerned.

Based on the above mentioned and the operational results gained during the implementation of the joint operation, the number of incidents involving the deployed EU experts, it is justified to consider that operational concept was implemented according to the operational plan.

4.1.2. Operational results

The JO Coordination Points 2014 was implemented during the period of 8 April - 16 December 2014 with the aim of establishing a system for the exchange of information related to the early detection of illegal migration flows towards the EU through the territories of third countries. Furthermore, the establishment and exchange of best practices should improve practical cooperation between the competent authorities involved in tackling of illegal migration and other cross-border crime. The collection of operational information from all participants and sources involved should have support risk assessments that underpinned operational activities, thus contributing to the implementation of the Integrated Border Management standards in order to benefit all stakeholders.

During the implementation of the JO Coordination Points 2014, the following operational results were reported:

- 15 illegal border-crossing incidents occurred involving the apprehension of 19 irregular migrants
- 2 facilitation incidents occurred involving the apprehension of 4 irregular migrants and the arrest of 4 facilitators
- 15 falsification incidents occurred involving the detection of 22 irregular migrants
- 74 other incidents occurred involving the detection of 22 persons
- 53 overstay incidents occurred involving the detection of 106 persons (overstayers)
- 1 prevention of departure incident occurred involving the detection of 5 persons
- 8 readmission incidents occurred involving the readmission of 12 persons
- 215 refusal of entry incidents occurred involving 525 persons
- 12 smuggling of good incidents occurred involving the apprehension/arrest of 17 persons
- 4 stolen vehicle incidents occurred involving the apprehension of 4 persons

4.1.3. Operational coordination structures

Due the specific character of the activity (similar to JO Focal Points Land), JO Coordination points 2014 did not have an operational structure similar to other land border operations. ICC or LCCs were not established within the joint operation, neither deployment of Frontex Operational Coordinators at the operational area.

Command and control of the EU experts remained with the competent national authority of the host TC.

Communication flow of the operational activity followed the standard practise and was channelled directly from CP to FSC. The Local coordinators from respective CPs were responsible of daily based JORA reporting. Furthermore, communication, information and reporting flow at Frontex level were channelled via the FSC which was a practical solution in order to facilitate uniform, permanent and interlinked communication for all actors involved.

4.1.4. Resources deployed

According to the operational plan, activities implemented during the joint operation were focused on border checks. The deployment of EU experts at the operational area was firstly meant to support third countries authorities in performing border checks in general. However, as in all Frontex coordinated activities, the EU experts assisted local staff not only in the verification of travel documents, but also in the verification of other documents of individuals, vehicles or other entities. Based on the request formulated by the local authorities, EU experts provided practical field training to staff host authority staff members concerned.

The EU experts deployed within the joint operation were experienced professionals. They had the skills and capacity needed to perform their duties according to the requirements of EBGT profiles (Advanced Level document experts and Stolen Vehicle Experts) and provisions of the operational plan. The added value of implementation of the joint operation was that most of the EU experts had already participated on Frontex operational activities several times. Russian language skills should be highlighted as an added value especially at the operational area of Moldova and Ukraine. Deployed EU experts with the Russian language skills were highly appreciated by the hosting authorities and enhanced the effectiveness of the Frontex presence.

4.2. Situational Awareness

4.2.1. Threats and Risks, modus operandi and trends identified

4.2.1.1. Albanian-Montenegrin border

During the period under analysis 3 incidents were reported from the [REDACTED]: 1 illegal border-crossing incident occurred involving the apprehension of 2 irregular Syrian migrants; 1 refusal of entry was issued involving 1 Greek national, and the reason for refusal was 'A - no valid travel documents'; while 1 other incident occurred involving 1 Albanian national who presented an Albanian passport at the border control. This passport was then seized by Albanian officers because it was not valid.

During the period under review, 15 incidents involving the detection of 19 persons were reported from the BCP Murriqan. Most of these incidents were related to refusals of entry and they were primarily associated with Belarusian nationals (6) who were refused entry for reason 'C - no valid visa or residence permit', as well with EU citizens (4), who were refused entry for reason 'A - no valid travel documents'.

One smuggling of goods incident was reported, involving the arrest of 2 Albanian smugglers and the seizure of 1 712.5 grams of marijuana during the period of analysis.

Commented [A2]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the operational area. Its disclosure would expose law enforcement officials' patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate 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.

Additionally, 1 stolen vehicle incident was reported from the [REDACTED], involving the arrest of 1 Kosovar smuggler and the seizure of a Volkswagen Golf IV (stolen).

The data reported in FRAN indicates that the number of illegal border-crossings detected at the Albanian-Montenegrin⁴ border during the first 11 months of 2014 (236)⁵, increased by approximately 38% compared to the corresponding period of 2013. Nearly all apprehended migrants (218) were detected between BCPs and very few (3) were detected at BCP. The main nationalities of the apprehended migrants were Syrian (91), Eritrean (46), Albanian (32), Somali (30) and Congolese (10). Roughly 12% of the apprehended migrants were migrants from Western Balkan countries, while the other 88% were travelling as secondary movements from Greece.

Most of the irregular migratory pressure exerted during the first 11 months of 2014, at the Albanian-Montenegrin border, was recorded during the months of January and from April to June. This represents a change in the seasonal patterns, compared to 2013, when the highest pressure was recorded in the months of August and September and it can be attributed to the fluctuations in the number of migrants travelling on the eastern Mediterranean route, which are reverberating across the Western Balkan region.

4.2.1.2. The Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border

[REDACTED]

During the reporting period, 276 incidents involving the detection of 583 persons were reported from [REDACTED]. Nearly 78% of these persons were refused entry (456 persons), while 31 persons were reported for overstaying and 22 persons were reported for falsification of documents.

The refusal of entry incidents were primarily linked to Serbian nationals (319) and the main reasons for refusing entry were 'E - no appropriate documentation justifying the purpose and conditions of stay' (191) and 'I - threat to public policy, internal security, public health or the international relations' (64). Belarusian nationals (64) ranked second in terms of the number of refusals of entry and all were refused entry for reason 'C - no valid visa or residence permit'.

Roughly two thirds of the persons reported for overstaying during the operational period originated from Western Balkan countries or from EU member states neighbouring the Western Balkan region: Serbian nationals (15) ranked first, followed by nationals from Bosnia-Herzegovina (5) and from Albania (2). Most of the persons detected for overstaying at [REDACTED] were subject to penalties (i.e. these persons were fined and banned for two years from entering the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

With regard to abuse of travel documents reported from [REDACTED], nearly 55% of the detected persons were nationals of third countries outside the Western Balkan region, while the other 45% were nationals from third countries neighbouring the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (countries within the Western Balkan region). Syrians (9) were chiefly reported for the falsification of travel documents, followed by Kosovars (5) and Albanians (4).

[REDACTED]

During the reporting period, 8 illegal border-crossing incidents were reported involving the apprehension of 10 irregular migrants. Most of the apprehended migrants (6 Albanians, 1 Serbian and 1 Somali) were detected on entry from Serbia to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, while the others (2 Turks) were detected on exit from the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to Serbia.

³ 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.

⁵ FRAN data (WB-RAN): Illegal border-crossings between BCPs (IBC-1A) and illegal border-crossings at BCP (IBC-1B) reported by the Albanian and Montenegrin authorities at the Albanian-Montenegrin border.

Commented [A3]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the modus operandi of criminal networks. Its disclosure would jeopardize the work of law enforcement officials and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate 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.

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Commented [A6]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the operational area. Its disclosure would expose law enforcement officials' patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate 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.

[REDACTED]

With reference to cross border crime related incidents, during the implementation period of the JO Coordination Points 2014, the [REDACTED] reported 10 smuggling of goods incidents involving the arrest of 14 smugglers (5 former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian nationals, 4 Albanians, 2 Polish, 2 Serbians and 1 Kosovar) and the seizure of 45 800 grams of marijuana, 5 320 cigarettes, 700 grams of gold jewellerys and two 7.62 mm bullets. Additionally, 3 stolen vehicle incidents occurred involving the arrest of 3 smugglers (1 former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian national, 1 Polish and 1 Serbian). They were detected on entry from Serbia by police officers from the [REDACTED].

According to data reported in FRAN⁶, during the period January-November 2014, the highest migratory pressure from all border sections inside the Western Balkan region was recorded at the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border which reported a total of 3 312 irregular migrants detected for illegal-border-crossing. Nearly 98% of the migrants were travelling as secondary movements from Bulgaria and Greece while the other 2% were nationals of Western Balkan countries.

Most of the migrants apprehended at the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border attempted to cross the border illegally between BCPs, while very few tried at BCPs. Roughly 98% of the detections were made by the Serbian authorities, while the other 2% were made by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia authorities.

Taking into account the precipitous increase in the number of irregular migrants travelling on the eastern Mediterranean route recorded during 2014, compared to 2013, and the fact that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border represented the main transit point used by migrants linked to secondary movements to travel across the Western Balkan region, we might expect that the migratory pressured at this border section will remain high in 2015.

4.2.1.3. Moldovan-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Moldovan border

During the reporting period, 105 incidents involving the detection of 189 persons were reported within the operational area of the JO Coordination Points 2014 at the Moldovan-Ukrainian border. The highest number of incidents was reported from the [REDACTED].

Most of the detected persons were reported because of overstaying (75), followed by refusal of entry (54) and by other (52). The main nationalities of the detected persons were Moldovan (101) and Russian (54).

The number of illegal border-crossings recorded at this border section was very low (6 Moldovans and 1 Russian), and all the irregular migrants were apprehended within the operational area of the [REDACTED].

[REDACTED]

During the period under analysis, 7 incidents, involving the detection of 7 persons, were reported from the [REDACTED]: 4 other incidents occurred involving 4 Moldovan nationals who were refused exit primarily for not having valid travel documents while 2 incidents of overstaying were reported involving 1 Bulgarian and 1 Ukrainian.

[REDACTED]

During the period under review, 46 incidents, involving the detection of 46 persons, were reported from the [REDACTED]; 44 other incidents occurred involving 44 Moldovan nationals who were refused exit primarily for not having valid travel documents. In addition, 2 refusal of entry incidents were reported involving 2

⁶ *Illegal border-crossings between BCPs (IBC-1A) and illegal border-crossings at BCP (IBC-1B) reported by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Serbian authorities at the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border.*

Commented [A7]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the modus operandi of criminal networks. Its disclosure would jeopardize the work of law enforcement officials and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate 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.

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Lithuanian nationals who were refused entry for presenting expired powers of attorney which entitled them to drive the cars they were travelling in.

██████████

During the reporting period, 52 incidents, involving the detection of 136 persons, were reported from the ██████████. Nearly half of these persons (73) were reported for overstaying and their main nationalities were Russian (27) and Moldovan (25).

Refusal of entry incidents (52) ranked second in terms of the number of persons detected during the reporting period and they can be largely attributed to Russian (26) and Moldovan (18) nationals. The main reasons for refusal of entry were 'G - insufficient means of subsistence' (20), 'F - stayed for three months during a six-month period' (13) and 'A - no valid travel document' (10).

Roughly all illegal border-crossing incidents detected within the operational area of ██████████ were linked to Moldovan nationals (6) and only one incident to Russian nationals (1).

Additionally, one smuggling of goods incident was reported during the period under analysis from ██████████ and involved the arrest of 1 Ukrainian smuggler and the seizure of 6.86 grams of marijuana.

The data reported in FRAN indicates that the number of illegal border-crossings recorded during the first 11 months of 2014 (775) decreased by nearly 35% compared to the corresponding period of 2013 (1 184) and that this trend was primarily associated to the decreasing number of apprehensions involving nationals from Moldova and Ukraine. Despite this decreasing trend, Moldovan and Ukrainian nationals were the top two nationalities reported for illegal border-crossings, from January to November 2014, at this border section. Roughly 65% of migrant apprehensions recorded during the first 11 months of 2014 were reported by the Ukrainian authorities, while the other 35% of migrant apprehensions were reported by the Moldovan authorities⁷. Nearly 68% of these detections involved illegal border-crossing attempts between BCPs, while the other 32% of detections involved illegal border-crossing attempts at BCPs.

During the first 11 months of 2014, 38 persons were reported in FRAN for the fraudulent use of travel documents at the Moldovan-Ukrainian border and most of these cases involved Moldovan-Ukrainians using primarily falsified Moldovan passports (e.g. falsified biometric page, page substitution, etc.).

4.2.2. Information gathering and exchange

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 system was used to exchange operational information with all the participants of the Joint Operation by collecting data via a standardized Incident Report template.

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

Following the Operational Plan, the reporting structure was carried out without problems.

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 to the Frontex Situation Centre, the following picture came apparent (see point 4.4. Reporting Performance). (Number of incidents reported in/out due time - according to the Operational Plan). During the operational phase 304 incidents were reported to FSC. 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 and Product 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.

⁷ FRAN data (EB-RAN): Illegal border-crossings between BCPs (IBC-1A) and illegal border-crossings at BCP (IBC-1B) reported by the Moldovan and the Ukrainian authorities at the Moldovan-Ukrainian border.

The FOSS (Frontex-One-Stop-Shop^[1]) portal was used in order to share operational-related information with all Joint Operation 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.

Commented [A9]: The blanked out parts contain details related to certain instruments used by law enforcement officials for information-sharing purposes. Their disclosure would jeopardize their work and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate 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.

4.3. Development

4.3.1. Operational cooperation

As a main outcome, operational cooperation during the operational activity was successful and based on mutual understanding. All counterparts were cooperative and supportive which facilitated smooth implementation throughout the activation period in all operational areas. In case of need, participating MSs were keen to support and assist in order to find a proper and most suitable solutions.

Cooperation between host TCs and home MSs

Operational needs of host TCs were easily defined and communicated during the planning meeting with Frontex and later on Home MSs fulfilled Annual Bilateral Talks requests without remarkable challenges. An additional requests for contribution was made and home MSs fulfilled them according to the operational needs which shows that cooperation between host TCs and contributing home MS worked properly.

Information exchange and cooperation during the implementation phase followed the definitions indicated in the Operational Plan. National authorities of the hosting TCs put additional efforts in order to coordinate work and facilitate support of deployed resources accordingly. No challenges or remarks related to cooperation on the spot between host TC, internal counterparts and EU experts were reported.

Cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations

Based on the best practices from the previous years (Project Coordination points 2012 and 2013), the Coordination Points of Moldova and Ukraine were activated in close cooperation with the European Border Assistance Mission to Moldova and Ukraine (hereinafter: EUBAM). EUBAM supported Frontex activities by providing information regarding the situation at the entire border section focusing on illegal migration in common understanding with Moldovan and Ukrainian partner and acted as a backup and liaised with the EU experts deployed. Furthermore, Joint Border Control Operation "Olvia", initiated by EUBAM, was implemented at the common border section of Moldova and Ukraine. It consisted of four operational phases between 2 June and 19 September 2014 and each phase covered different targets based on the risk analysis and priority assessments by the partner services as well as participating agencies. The EU experts deployed within the JO Coordination point 2014 supported the JBCO by exchange of information. Additionally, operational manager of the joint operation participated for phase A (Irregular migration, THB and Illegal border crossings) of the operation as a representative of Frontex in Operational Coordination Unit (OCU).

Following the practice established within the framework of the Project Coordination Points in Moldova and Ukraine implemented in 2012 and 2013, EUBAM was supporting the core idea of the Project in all stages from the operational and logistical point of view.

[1] [REDACTED]

Frontex coordination role

Frontex coordinated this operational activity according to the Operational Plan which was prepared transparently and in close cooperation with all counterparts. Cooperation and information exchange in this regard was in satisfactory level and should follow the same practise in planning of 2015 activities.

4.3.2. Operational briefing / debriefing

Assessment of Operational briefing and debriefing delivered by FX and Host MS

Operational briefings and debriefings were carried out in accordance with Operational plan and Handbook. Local authorities and Frontex representatives at the area provided a comprehensive and well-structured briefing and debriefing meetings. All important and relevant information on national and Frontex level were presented.

5. Main conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions	Recommendations
<p>Albanian-Montenegrin border:</p> <p>The number of illegal border-crossings detected within the operational area of the JO Coordination Points 2014 at the Albanian-Montenegrin border was very low.</p> <p>The data reported in FRAN for the first 11 months of 2014⁸ indicates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The number of illegal border-crossings detected at the Albanian-Montenegrin border during the first 11 months of 2014, increased by approximately 51% compared to the corresponding period of 2013. - Nearly all apprehended migrants were detected between BCPs and very few were detected at BCPs. - Roughly 12% of the apprehended migrants were migrants from the Western Balkan region, while the other 88% were travelling as secondary movements. 	<p>Frontex should continue the cooperation with the Albanian authorities within the framework of the JO Coordination Points 2015.</p> <p>Frontex and the Albanian authorities should explore the possibility of widening operational support by implementing border surveillance related activities within the framework of the joint operation.</p>
<p>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia-Serbian border:</p>	<p>Frontex and the authorities of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia should explore the possibility of widening operational support by</p>

⁸ FRAN data (WB-RAN): Illegal border-crossings between BCPs (IBC-1A) and illegal border-crossings at BCP (IBC-1B) reported by the Albanian and Montenegrin authorities at the Albanian-Montenegrin border.

<p>WB-RAN data indicates that during the first 11 months of 2014, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border reported the highest number of illegal-border crossings. Furthermore, most of these illegal border-crossings involved migrants travelling from Greece or Bulgaria as part of secondary movements. Bearing this in mind and also taking account of the precipitous increase in the number of irregular migrants travelling on the eastern Mediterranean route recorded during 2014, compared to 2013, we can expect that the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border will remain an important transit point used by migrants associated with secondary movements to travel across the Western Balkan region to the EU.</p>	<p>implementing border surveillance related activities into the framework of the joint operation.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>
<p>Moldovan-Ukrainian and Ukrainian -Moldovan borders:</p> <p>The number of migrant apprehensions recorded at the Moldovan-Ukrainian border was low during 2014 and was primarily related to migrants from the region (i.e. Moldovans and Russians). Instability in eastern Ukraine had a deterrent effect, by discouraging non-regional migrants from using Ukraine as a transit country to reach EU/SAC area.</p>	<p>Cooperation between the authorities of Moldova and Ukraine with the support of Frontextex should continue in 2015 within the framework of the operation.</p>
<p>JO Coordination Points (all border sections):</p> <p>The data collected within the JO Coordination Points 2014 was mainly quantitative data reported in JORA (statistical data). The lack of intelligence officers within the operational areas of the JO Coordination Points 2014 limited the possibility of collecting qualitative data.</p>	<p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>

Commented [A10]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the modus operandi of law enforcement officials. Its disclosure would jeopardize the work of law enforcement officials and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate 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.

Commented [A11]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the modus operandi of law enforcement officials. Its disclosure would jeopardize the work of law enforcement officials and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate 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.

FACT SHEETS - STATISTICS

1. Time schedule

Preparatory meeting with the HMS	n/a
Planning meeting with participating MSs	11-13 February 2014
Operational briefing/ debriefing meetings for the participants (FYROM)	08 April 2014; 06 May 2014; 03 June 2014; 01 July 2014; 29 July 2014; 26 August 2014; 23 September 2014; 21 October 2014; 18 November 2014; 16 December 2014
Operational briefing/ debriefing meetings for the participants (Moldova)	01 July 2014; 03 July 2014; 29 July 2014; 31 July 2014
Operational briefing/ debriefing meetings for the participants (Ukraine)	03 July 2014; 31 July 2014
Operational briefing/ debriefing meetings for the participants (Albania)	08 July 2014; 05 August 2014; 02 September 2014
Implementation of the joint operation	08 April - 16 December 2014
Evaluation meeting	18-19 November 2014

2. Participation

MS	Human resources	Deployment dates
Austria	7 advanced level document officers	08.04-03.05.2014; 03.06-01.07.2014; 01-29.07.2014; 29.07-23.09.2014; 23.09-21.10.2014; 21.10-18.11.2014; 18.11-16.12.2014
Croatia	3 advanced level document officers	03.06-01.07.2014; 01.07-29.07.2014; 21.10-18.11.2014
Estonia	1 advanced level document officer 1 stolen vehicles detection officer	03.07-31.07.2014
Finland	1 advanced level document officer	26.08-23.09.2014
France	4 advanced level document officers	03.07-31.07.2014; 08.07-05.08.2014; 05.08-02.09.2014; 23.09-21.10.2014
Hungary	4 advanced level document officers	08.04-06.05.2014; 06.05-03.06.2014; 03.06-01.07.2014; 18.11-16.12.2014
The Netherlands	2 advanced level document officers	03.07-31.07.2014; 05.08-02.09.2014
Latvia	2 advanced level document officers	03.07-31.07.2014
Poland	1 advanced level document officer 1 stolen vehicles detection officer	01.07-29.07.2014; 03.07-31.07.2014

Romania	4 advanced level document officers	08.04-03.06.2014; 01.07-31.07.2014; 08.07-05.08.2014; 29.07-21.10.2014
Slovenia	1 advanced level document officer 1 stolen vehicles detection officer	08.07-05.08.2014; 29.07-26.08.2014
Switzerland	1 advanced level document officer	05.08-02.09.2014

3. Financial information

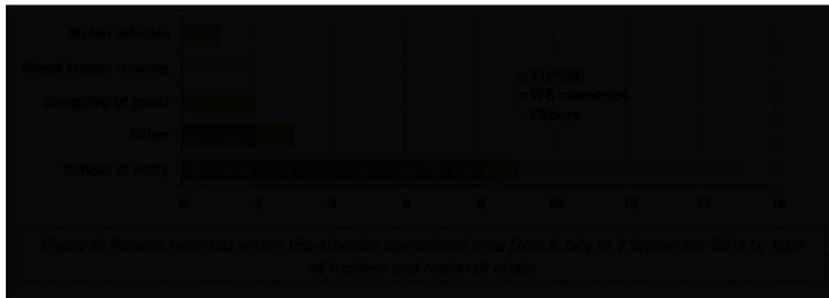
Final budget: EURO 230,000.00

Total commitment: EURO 242,599.15 with 31 numbers of SFD issued

Payment consumed: EURO 165,247.00 consumption 91.88 % (consumed budget*100/committed funds (EURO 179,856.93) with 28 final payment issued until 12.01.2015)

4. Statistics

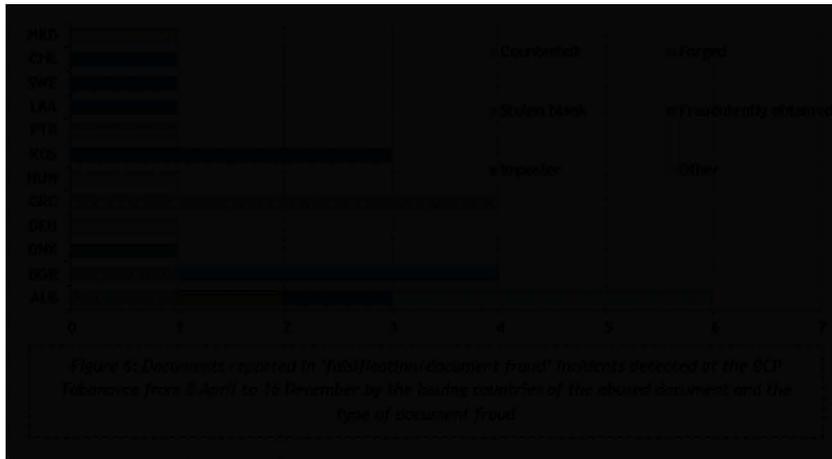
4.1. Albanian-Montenegrin border ([REDACTED])



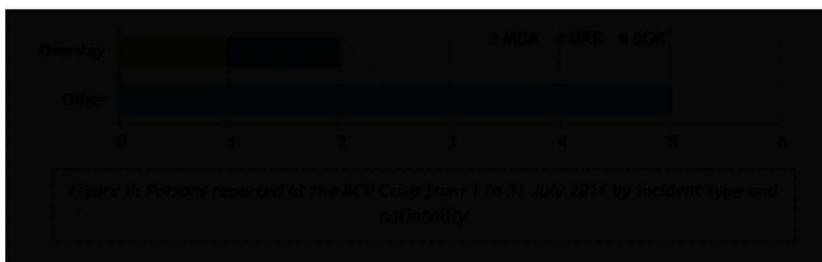
Commented [A12]: The blanked out parts contain detailed information regarding the operational area. Its disclosure would expose law enforcement officials' patrolling the area and harm the course of future and ongoing operations, and thus facilitate irregular migration. Therefore, public security will 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.

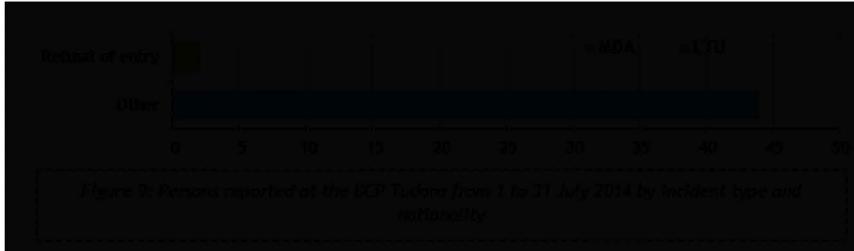
4.2. The former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonian-Serbian border ([REDACTED])





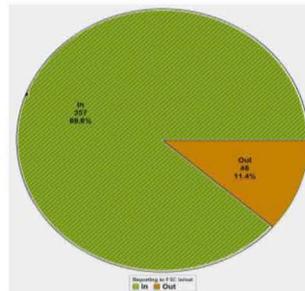
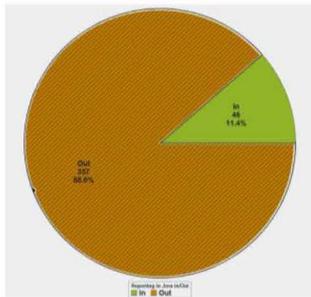
4.3. Moldovan-Ukrainian and Ukrainian-Moldovan border ([redacted])



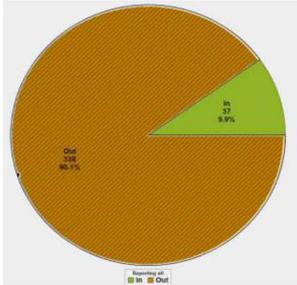


4.4. Reporting performance

1. Initial insertion of incidents into JORA (reporting unit)
2. Intermediate validation on national level (LCC/ICC)



3. Summary of the entire reporting sequence, from insertion until FSC validation



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