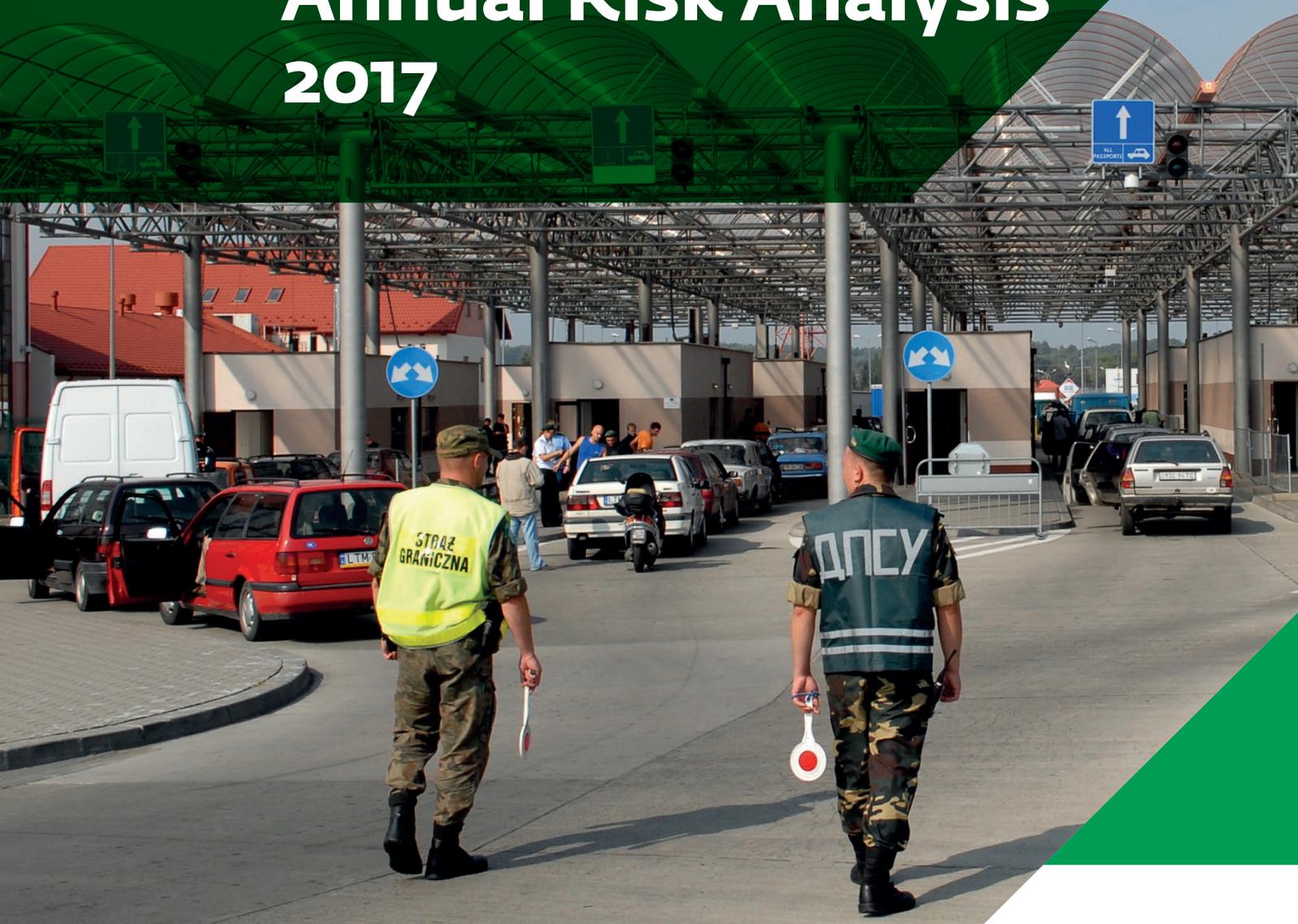


# Eastern Partnership Annual Risk Analysis 2017





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Warsaw, July 2017  
Risk Analysis Unit  
Frontex reference number: 15584/2017

**PDF version:**

TT-AM-17-001-EN-N  
ISBN 978-92-95205-97-0  
ISSN 2529-6647  
doi:10.2819/870001

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**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

The *Eastern European Borders Annual Risk Analysis 2017* has been prepared by the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit. During the course of developing this product, many colleagues at Frontex and outside contributed to it and their assistance is hereby acknowledged with gratitude.

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## List of acronyms used

<b>BCP</b>	border-crossing point
<b>CIRAM</b>	Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model
<b>CIRCABC</b>	Communication and Information Resource Centre for Administrations, Businesses and Citizens
<b>CIS</b>	Commonwealth of Independent States
<b>EaP</b>	Eastern Partnership
<b>EaP-RAN</b>	Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network
<b>EB-ARA</b>	Eastern European Borders Annual Risk Analysis
<b>EBC</b>	Eastern Borders Conference
<b>EB-RAN</b>	Eastern European Borders Risk Analysis Network
<b>EDF-RAN</b>	European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network
<b>EMCDDA</b>	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>FRAN</b>	Frontex Risk Analysis Network
<b>Frontex</b>	European Border and Coast Guard Agency (formerly European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union)
<b>ID</b>	identity document
<b>Interpol</b>	International Criminal Police Organization
<b>JO</b>	joint operation
<b>JORA</b>	Frontex Joint Operations Reporting Application
<b>LBTA</b>	local border traffic agreements
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NGO</b>	non-governmental organisation
<b>OCG</b>	organised crime group
<b>OSCE</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
<b>RFI</b>	Request for Information
<b>SAC</b>	Schengen Associated Countries
<b>SIS II</b>	Schengen Information System
<b>THB</b>	trafficking in human beings
<b>VIN</b>	vehicle identification number

# Executive summary

The unprecedented migration crisis of recent years has mostly affected the Eastern and Central Mediterranean migratory routes to the EU. However, in 2015 and early 2016, a partial shift of the migration flow to the northernmost section of the EU's eastern border was observed, when a few thousand migrants reached the EU/Schengen area on the so-called Northern (or Arctic) route. The situation at the eastern borders returned to normal later in 2016. In fact, most of the migration-related indicators showed a slight decline compared with 2015.

For example, there was a decrease in the number of illegal border-crossings of Vietnamese migrants reported within the EaP-RAN. Nevertheless, the number of migrants crossing the border illegally from the Russian Federation to the Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) remained relatively high. Most of the facilitators detected along the EU's eastern border were Russians of Chechen origin.

Importantly, a set of measures to curb migration flow implemented by the EaP-RAN members both inland and at the common borders, as well as temporary reintroduction of border controls at the EU's internal borders of Poland, led to a seasonal decrease in facilitated movements via the Baltic States and Poland.

Moreover, intra-Schengen movements of Vietnamese via the Baltic States and Poland were still reported in 2016. In some cases Vietnamese irregular migrants were exposed to health hazards while hiding in vehicles.

The number of Afghans and Syrians who crossed the border illegally from Ukraine also declined. The nationwide

operation 'Frontier-2016' launched by the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine significantly contributed to this decrease, in particular measures implemented in Zakarpattia, the region of Ukraine frequently transited by migrants from both Afghanistan and Syria. On the other hand, there were more Indians, Bangladeshis and Sri Lankans attempting to reach the EU via Ukraine.

In terms of other new developments, many Turkish citizens (mainly of Kurdish origin) were detected using false Schengen visas or attempting to cross the border illegally from Ukraine intending to ultimately reach Germany.

With regard to illegal border-crossings by nationals from the countries of the region and/or the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), a drop of 20% was recorded. Most of them were detected at the borders of Ukraine.

In contrast to the relatively low number of reported illegal border-crossings, the number of people refused entry to the EU at its eastern land borders exceeded 118 000 compared with just 61 590 in 2015. The vast majority of refusals of entry (96%) was issued to regional nationalities. Russians prevailed with an over fourfold increase in refusals of entry compared with 2015.

In addition to the Russian citizens, the number of refusals of entry issued to Tajiks doubled. This increase was matched by a similar rise in asylum applications of Tajiks at the EU level. Among the EU Member States, the vast majority of refusals was issued by Poland, while the highest number of

citizens of Tajikistan submitted their asylum requests in Germany.

Finally, data collected within the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network (EaP-RAN), as well as the results of Frontex-coordinated Joint Operations, indicate that tobacco products remained the excise goods that were most frequently smuggled across the EU's eastern borders towards the EU.

The year 2016 was marked by an increased number of detections of contraband tobacco hidden in cargo trains, a growing number of cases where flying objects were used to smuggle goods across the border, as well as more minors detected while smuggling cigarettes between BCPS.

As regards illicit drugs, hashish and synthetic drugs were mostly trafficked out of the EU, whereas heroin and cocaine were smuggled into the EU, which was either the destination or a transit area towards the Russian market.

In conclusion, the migratory crisis in the EU had very limited impact on the irregular migratory movements within the EaP countries or en route towards neighbouring EU Member States. This is not likely to change significantly in the future provided that the current operational response by all the countries in the region is maintained.

# 1. Introduction and methodology

Frontex created a concept of Eastern Borders Conference (EBC) in August 2008. The EBC was designed as a regular activity/forum where specific challenges related to irregular migration at the eastern borders of the EU could be addressed by the Frontex Risk Analysis Network (FRAN) and the relevant neighbouring third countries.

By 2009, Frontex signed cooperation arrangements with Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Moldova and Belarus. Subsequently, it was proposed to set up a permanent Eastern European Borders Risk Analysis Network (EB-RAN) to be comprised of the competent border-control authorities from the mentioned four countries and the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit. Additional agreements were later signed allowing for the establishment of regular information exchange and joint analytical activities: with Moldova in March 2009 (Cooperation Plan), with Ukraine in November 2010 (Mechanism on information exchange for risk analysis cooperation) and with Belarus also in November 2010 (Memorandum on regular exchange of information and joint analytical activities). Importantly, even though the Russian Federation opted to stay out of the EB-RAN and does not contribute to its work, this report continues to cover external land borders of EU Member States with the Russian Federation with data provided only by EU Member States and Schengen Associated Countries.

In January 2016, three new countries – Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia –

joined the EB-RAN under the EU-funded Eastern Partnership Integrated Border Management Capacity Building Project. Upon this extension, the network was renamed as the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network (EaP-RAN).

## 1.1. Data collection and additional information

In order to facilitate the exchange of information between EaP-RAN (then EB-RAN) countries and Frontex, the European Commission together with Frontex set up a secure Internet platform on the Commission's CIRCABC server, also available to the FRAN. This platform is used exclusively by EaP-RAN countries and the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit.

Available statistical data from Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine cover the time period starting from 2010, while data from Azerbaijan and Georgia only from 2016.<sup>1</sup> The regional overview of the migration situation is based on monthly statistical data provided by EaP-RAN countries and neighbouring FRAN members: Norway, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania (only common borders, or borders with the Russian Federation) covering the year 2016. There are five key indicators of irregular migration: (1) detections of illegal border-crossing; (2) detections of facilitators; (3) detections of

illegal stay; (4) refusals of entry; and (5) asylum applications. The sixth indicator used in previous reports (detections of false documents) is now covered by the EDF-RAN (European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network) with its statistical templates.

The *Eastern Partnership Annual Risk Analysis 2017* follows the notion of 'risk' as defined by the updated Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model, introduced in 2011. Prior to the expert meeting of 10 March 2017, the following EaP-RAN countries – Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine – were addressed with a Request for Information (RFI) covering the main risks defined in accordance with CIRAM methodology.

Other sources include, in particular, bi-monthly analytical reports from EU Member States, FRAN Quarterlies and other analyses produced in the course of 2016, as well as reporting from different Joint Operations coordinated by Frontex. Open sources – such as reports issued by government agencies, EU institutions and international or non-governmental organisations – were also consulted.

## 1.2. Quality of available data

Consistent with other law-enforcement indicators, variation in administrative data related to border control depends on several factors. For example, the number of detections of illegal border-crossing and refusals of entry are both functions of the amount of effort spent detecting migrants and the flow of irregular migrants. Thus, an increased number of detections of illegal border-crossing might result from an actual increase in the flow of irregular migrants or it may in fact be an outcome of more resources made available to detect migrants. In exceptional cases, an influx

<sup>1</sup> Statistical data provided by Armenia are not consistent with the definitions and format of the EaP-RAN.

of resources may produce an increase in reported detections while effectively masking the actual decrease in the flow of migrants, due to a strong deterrent effect. Similar issues should be taken into account regarding the number of detections of cross border crime at the borders. A higher number of detections at a particular border-crossing point might indicate a surge in criminality, but may also be the result of more efficient border control and/or the presence of specialists whose expertise in a certain area (the identification of stolen vehicles, for instance) may lead to a high number of detections.

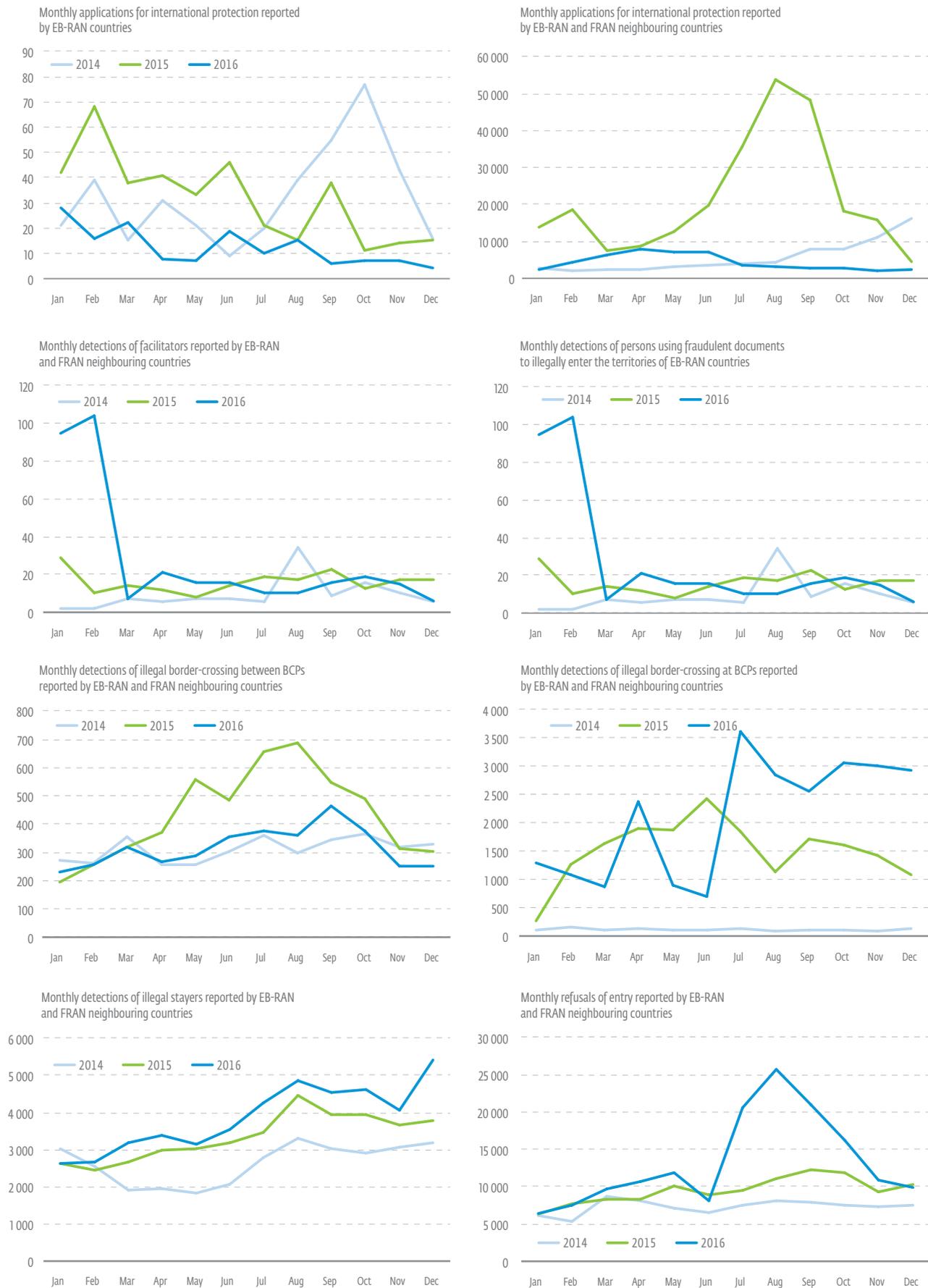
The statistical data used for this analysis should not be considered as official statistics but as a way of managing information to support the planning of joint operational activities. The data might therefore occasionally vary from data published officially by national authorities. The use of slightly adapted FRAN monthly statistical templates by EaP-

RAN countries led to some compatibility issues between the FRAN and EaP-RAN data sets. In particular, reasons for refusals of entry (Indicator 4) are standardised for FRAN members, but vary among EaP-RAN members according to their national legislations. Detections of illegal border-crossing at BCPs (Indicator 1B), as reported by EaP-RAN countries, should also be analysed with caution since they may include data for persons using forged documents (Indicator 6) as well. Moreover, it should be taken into consideration that figures for illegal stay (Indicator 3) refer only to detections at the border on exit of persons overstaying in a particular country. As regards some of the neighbouring FRAN members, the indicator on asylum applications does not have a clear link with the common borders (especially Hungary, Finland and Norway) as most asylum seekers arrive in these countries using other routes.

### **1.3. Application of the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM)**

A key development in the CIRAM update released in 2011 is the adoption of a management approach to risk analysis that defines 'risk' as a function of 'threat', 'vulnerability' and 'impact'. Such an approach endeavours to emphasise risk analysis as a key tool in ensuring the optimal allocation of resources within the constraints of budget, staff and efficiency of equipment. According to the model, a 'threat' is a force or pressure acting upon the external borders that is characterised by both its magnitude and likelihood; 'vulnerability' is defined as the capacity of a system to mitigate the threat and 'impact' is determined as the potential consequences of the threat. In this way, the structured and systematic breakdown of risk is presented in the risk assessment and conclusions chapters.

**Figure 1. Evolution of EaP-RAN<sup>2</sup> and FRAN indicators – common EU's eastern border**



<sup>2</sup> Data of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine only  
Source: EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

Figure 2. **Geographical scope of the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network**

Note on definitions: in the text 'common borders' refers both to borders between EU Member States and Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine (covered by both sides) and borders of EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries with the Russian Federation (covered only by the EU/Schengen side of the border)



## 2. Situation at the border – overview

### 2.1. Border surveillance

#### Illegal border-crossing

In 2016, over 3 980 persons were detected for illegal border-crossing between BCPs by the member countries of the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network<sup>3</sup> (EaP-RAN). Ukraine reported the highest number of detections, followed by Belarus, Hungary and Latvia.

Over 54% of detections involved regional citizens (of EaP and CIS countries), mostly Ukrainians, Moldovans and Russians. The vast majority of the reported cases (75%) was linked either to smuggling or other reasons not related to migration.

Non-regional migrants, in turn, constituted 45% of detected cases, involving mostly Vietnamese and Afghan citizens, followed by Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, Indians and Turks. Irregular migration was the main reason for crossing the border illegally. Importantly, while the number of detections of Vietnamese and Afghans dropped significantly, there was an increase in the number of citizens of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India and Turkey.

#### Common borders

At the common borders, detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs – reported by both sides of the border<sup>4</sup> –

<sup>3</sup> Data for Armenia not included

<sup>4</sup> Including the border with the Russian Federation with data from the EU Member State's side of the border only.

decreased by 33% compared with 2015. A significant drop was related to Afghans, Vietnamese, Syrians and Iraqis. There was a visible increase in the number of nationals of India, Ukraine, Turkey, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Ukraine reported the majority of detections of illegal border-crossing followed by Hungary and Latvia.

#### Eastern Partnership and external borders

At the Eastern Partnership and external borders, 1 415 cases of illegal border-crossing were detected. More than 85% of the detections were made at the Ukrainian borders with Belarus, Moldova and the Russian Federation, involving mostly regional migrants, i.e.

Ukrainians, Moldovans and Russians. Non-regional migrants from a variety of countries were detected in low numbers. They were predominantly citizens of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Iran and Vietnam.

#### Facilitators

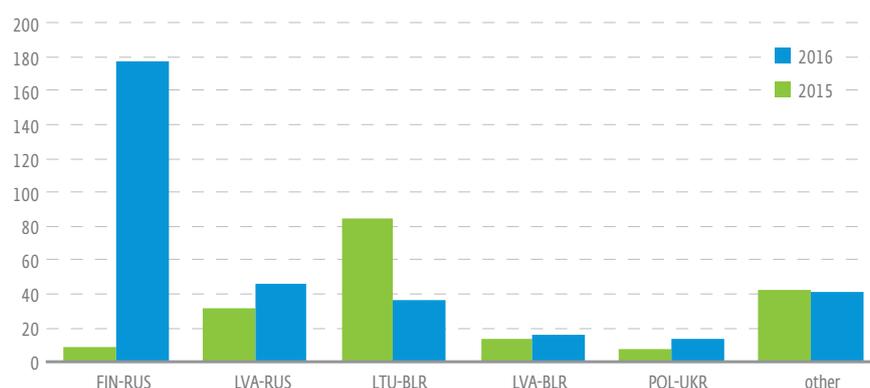
The number of facilitators reported within the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network (EaP-RAN) reached 340 persons. Most detections were recorded by Finland (52%), Belarus (19%) and Latvia (14%).

The vast majority of facilitators was detected at the common borders (95%).

The high number of detected facilitators can be explained by the irregular migration on the Northern route (closed in

Figure 3. Most detections reported at the EU's eastern borders in 2016 were reported at the Finnish-Russian, Latvian-Russian and Lithuanian-Belarusian border sections. The high number of facilitators at the Finnish-Russian border can be explained by the irregular migration on the Northern route (closed in March 2016)

Facilitators detected at the top five border sections in 2016 compared with 2015



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

**An international agreement was signed aiming at reducing irregular migration and cross-border crime**

On 27 September 2016, 'Joint Patrol Agreement' was signed between the State Border Guard and the State Police of Latvia, and the Lithuanian State Border Guard Service and Police Department, both under the Ministry of the Interior. The Agreement launched cooperation between the border and police authorities of the neighbouring countries in the form of organising joint patrols on both sides of the border with the aim to ensure public order, prevent irregular migration and criminal offences, and thus reduce the risk of cross-border crime and illegal immigration.

Source: [lietuvsdiena.lrytas.lt](http://lietuvsdiena.lrytas.lt)

March 2016). The top five nationalities of facilitators reported by Finland were citizens of Afghanistan, India, Cameroon, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Facilitators detected at all the other border sections were mostly citizens of the countries of the region, with Russians ranking first, followed by Belarusians and Ukrainians.

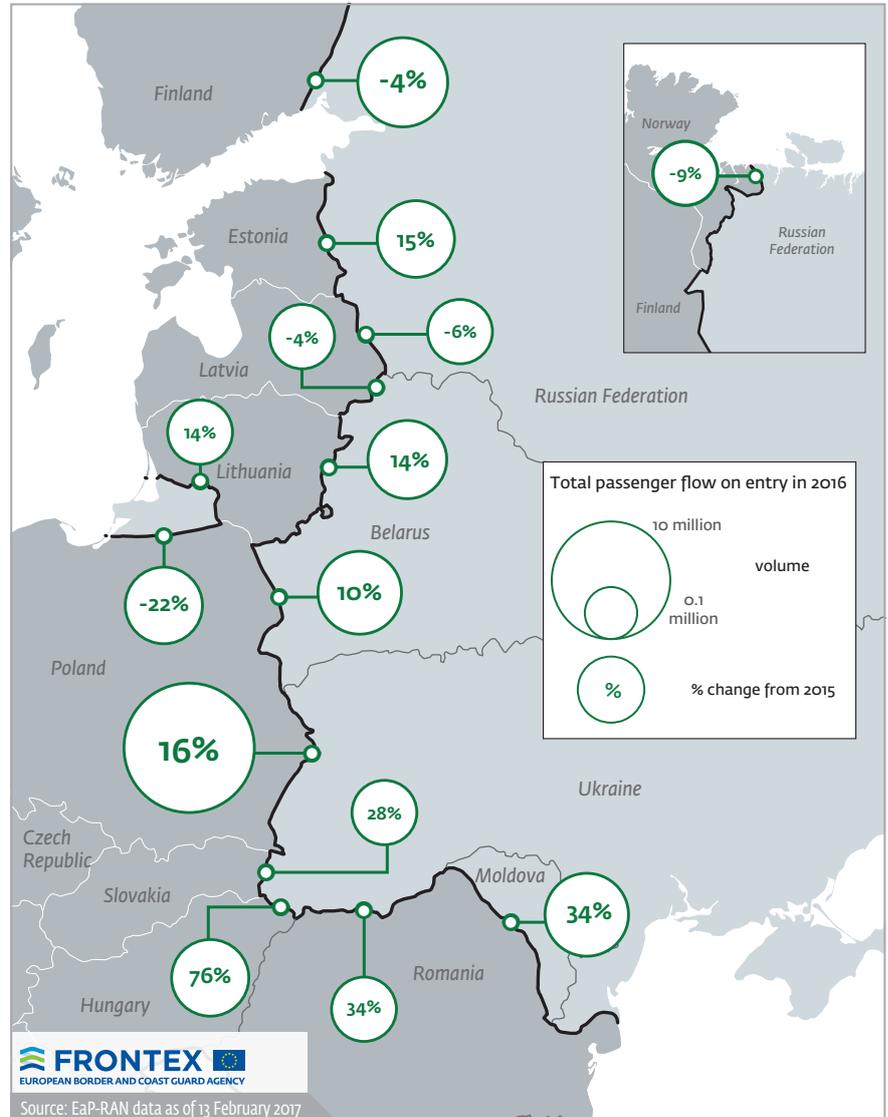
Between 4 July and 2 August 2016, border checks of persons were temporarily introduced by Poland at its green borders with the Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania and Slovakia, in ports and airports, which constitute an internal border as stated in the Schengen Borders Code. The reintroduction of border control was related to two important events hosted by Poland: the NATO summit held in Warsaw on 8-9 July 2016 and the World Youth Days held in Kraków on 26-31 July 2016.

Due to the NATO summit and the World Youth Days, the local border traffic with Ukraine and the Russian Federation was suspended.

Source: Polish Border Guard

**Figure 4. The Polish-Ukrainian border remained the busiest section in terms of border crossing, followed by the Finnish-Russian and Romanian-Moldovan borders**

Regular passenger flow on entry to EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries in 2016 at the EU's eastern borders in comparison to 2015



**2.2. Border checks**

**Regular passenger flow**

The data on regular passenger flow reported by FRAN members were collected under the pilot project for the fourth year in a row, starting from October 2013 (with data for September 2013), whereas collection of data from the EB-RAN countries (Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine) started in 2014. New members of the EaP-RAN network, namely Armenia, Azerbaijan

and Georgia do not participate in regular passenger flow data collection.

The total number of border-crossings on entry to the EU via its eastern borders in regular cross-border traffic at the common borders (including the border with the Russian Federation) reached over 41.4 million in 2016 and was 13% higher compared with 2015. The total share of third-country citizens reached 71%, while 29% of the regular passenger flow was associated with the citizens of EU Member States. Moldova and Ukraine

reported an additional 38 million regular border-crossings at its borders with regional neighbours, with a 48% share related to foreigners.

Depending on the border section, the passenger flow fluctuated in 2016 compared with 2015. The main reasons affecting the magnitude of the regular passenger flows include: the number of visas issued by EU Member States, movements under the local border traffic agreements (LBTA), fluctuation of shopping-related cross-border travel by both EU and EaP-RAN neighbouring countries and the Russian Federation, economic situation of the neighbouring countries and currency exchange rate or entry restrictions.

In terms of regular border-crossings, the Polish-Ukrainian border remained the busiest section, followed by the Finnish-Russian and Romanian-Moldovan borders.

The most significant decrease in regular passenger flow, in absolute and relative terms, was reported at the Polish-Russian border section. Importantly, the suspension of the local border traffic agreements (LBTA) by Poland due to re-introduction of internal border controls (4 July–2 August 2016) in connection to the NATO summit and the World Youth Days significantly affected regular border traffic in question.

At the Eastern Partnership and external borders, the busiest border was the Ukrainian-Russian section.

All border sections – common, Eastern Partnership and external – are subject to some distinctive seasonal trends resulting from labour migration and tourism. Peaks observed during the holiday seasons and the weekends create considerable pressure on the capacity of the BCPs, which requires an optimal use of resources in order to avoid undue waiting time for bona fide travellers.

### Clandestine entries

There were 55 cases of clandestine entry attempts reported within the EaP-RAN, mainly by Romania, Azerbaijan, Poland, Georgia, Lithuania and Slovakia.

### Migrants hiding in wooden boxes on the way to Hungary

Ukrainian border guards and police officers detained two residents of the Ivano-Frankivsk region of Ukraine who were transporting three citizens of India towards the border with Hungary in a wooden box inside their cargo van.

Sources: zakarpattya4all.xyz, 7 August 2016

The detected persons were the citizens of Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Belarus, Georgia, Turkey and Iran.

### Refusals of entry

In 2016, a total of 164 405 refusals of entry was reported by the members of the Eastern Partnership Risk Analysis Network. Over 93% of refusals were issued at land borders, mostly by Poland and Belarus.

At the common borders, refusals of entry issued by EU Member States and Schengen Associated Countries increased by nearly 92% (from 61 598 in 2015 to 118 079 in 2016). The increase in refusals was mostly associated with an increased flow of Russian citizens. Ukrainians and Tajiks followed Russians as the nationals most frequently refused entry at the EU's eastern borders in 2016.

At the Eastern Partnership and external borders, there were 46 326 refusals of entry reported in 2016, 77% and 16% of which were issued at the land and air borders, respectively. Belarus issued the majority of refusals, followed by Ukraine and Georgia.

### Document fraud

In 2016, there were 575 detections of persons using fraudulent documents reported by the five Eastern Partnership countries (Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine). Most detections were made by Ukraine and Azerbaijan.

With regards to nationalities, Ukrainians and Moldovans were most frequently detected among fraudulent document users.

### THB from Nigeria on Russian student visas

According to some Moscow-based NGOs focusing on preventing human trafficking, around 2 000–3 000 Nigerian girls are brought to the Russian Federation each year for prostitution. Criminal groups appear to be taking advantage of Russian student visas, which are not easy to obtain, as universities must provide supporting documents for the applications. Nigerians come to the Russian Federation officially to study and then disappear for years into the sex trade and the authorities are unable to track them.

Nigerian girls in Nigeria are lured by promises of a well-paid job in the Russian Federation allowing them to reimburse the costs of the visa and the journey (estimated at the level of USD 40 000).

Source: www.dw.com, 21 April 2016

The vast majority of commonly used fraudulent documents were passports (65%). Visas and stamps represented 13% and 10% of fraudulent documents reported, respectively.

In 2016, visa abuse remained one of the main *modi operandi* used by non-regional migrants attempting to enter the EU. Moreover, fraudulently obtained visas are likely to be used by organised crime groups (OCGs) as an effective tool in their THB activities.

## 3. Situation in the Eastern Partnership region

### 3.1. Illegal stay in EaP-RAN countries

There were over 30 100 detections of illegal stay reported by Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine in 2016. The top five detected nationalities included Russians, Ukrainians, Moldovans, Georgians and Azerbaijanis.

As much as 99% of detections of illegal stay were reported on exit. The Ukrainian borders with Belarus and the Russian Federation were the most affected

sections, followed by Ukrainian and Belarusian airports.

In the case of Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine only (reporting countries under EB-RAN in 2015), overall there was a slight increase in detections of illegal stay in 2016 compared with 2015. However, a drop in the number of Russian and Ukrainian illegal stayers was reported.

#### Fourteen Vietnamese staying illegally in Ukraine were detected in an underground workshop in Odessa region

In March 2016, the staff of the State Border Guard Service together with the officials of the Public Prosecutor's Office disclosed an underground workshop in Odessa region, where migrants from Vietnam sewed clothes. The migrants had to work in the workshop to pay off the facilitation fees before the organisers of irregular migration would take them to EU Member States. During the search, 14 citizens of Vietnam with no documents were detected.

Source: State Border Guard Service of Ukraine's official website, 16 March 2016



#### Operation 'Frontier-2016' in Ukraine

Following the operation 'Frontier-2015', during which over 1 970 irregular immigrants were apprehended, the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine launched the operation 'Frontier-2016' as of 20 April 2016. This nationwide operation requires close cooperation of the majority of Ukrainian ministries and departments, as well as representatives of law-enforcement authorities of the neighbouring countries.

The operation aims at combating irregular migration, human trafficking, as well as fighting illegal movement of excise goods and smuggling of drugs and weapons across the state border of Ukraine.

The main objectives of the operation are to check main locations where irregular migrants stay on a regular basis as well as perform comprehensive checks of roads, airports, sea and river harbours and vessels to identify routes and channels of irregular migration flows across the territory of Ukraine. Moreover, the operation involves strengthened controls in border areas and cooperation with neighbouring EU Member States.

According to the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, from the start of the operation 'Frontier-2016' until mid-December 2016, 1 700 violators of the state border were detected, over 4 000 violators of border regime detained and more than 320 irregular migrants apprehended. In addition, around 400 tonnes of contraband alcohol, nearly 2.5 million packs of cigarettes, 315 kg of amber, 70 kg of drugs and 280 weapons were seized.

Source: State Border Guard Service of Ukraine

## 4. Annual risk assessment

### 4.1. Cross-border smuggling and the exploitation of green/blue borders as points of entry for smuggled goods (tobacco products, fuel, stolen vehicles, drugs and other goods)

EaP-RAN data as well as information from Frontex-coordinated Joint Operations, supported by open sources, indicate that cross-border criminality: mainly large- and small-scale smuggling of excise goods, trafficking in stolen vehicles and the smuggling of drugs, remain the most significant threats to border security at the common land borders.

Due to differing legal and institutional characteristics, national border guard authorities along the EU's eastern borders have different types and varying degrees of responsibilities in the fight against cross-border crimes. Moreover, the nature and extent of inter-agency cooperation at the external borders varies greatly between these countries. Typically, preventing the smuggling of goods falls more under the responsibility of customs authorities rather than border guards. Nevertheless, border guards have to regularly engage in combating these criminal activities, especially along the green borders. Indeed, according to statistical data, smuggling of goods at some border sections seems a more common reason than migration for crossing the border illegally.

#### Smuggling of excise goods

##### Illicit tobacco

Tobacco products remained the most smuggled excise goods to the EU across its eastern borders. It should be underlined, however, that due to the lack of complete data on detections of contraband cigarettes, the assessment of both the scale as well as the most challenging sections of the EU's eastern borders was limited.

According to the available EaP-RAN data and information from Frontex-coordinated JOs, supported by open sources, more than 18.8 million cigarettes were seized by the authorities at the EU's eastern borders in over 400 cases in 2016.

While small amounts of cigarettes brought in by individuals via BCPs were primitively hidden in their cars or in buses, OCGs used specially-built compartments to conceal goods in vehicles, more sophisticated hiding places in trains, or even rafts and gliders to cross the borders with the illicit tobacco products.

According to open sources and the available data reported by the EU Member States bordering with Belarus and Ukraine, cargo trains heading to Latvia, Lithuania and Poland were increasingly used as a means of transportation for contraband tobacco in 2016. Cigarette smuggling in cargo trains became a fre-

quently used *modus operandi* reported at the EU's eastern borders due to the fact that it makes potential personal involvement difficult to prove.

In general, the continuous smuggling of excise goods through the common EU's eastern borders can be explained by large price differences between EU countries and their eastern neighbours, which creates a major incentive for smuggling. No significant changes are expected in the foreseeable future, considering the current economic standing of Ukraine and the Russian Federation. On the contrary, smuggling may even intensify if its profitability increases in the coming year.

##### Fuel smuggling

Contraband petroleum products were detected mainly at the EU's eastern borders with Belarus, Ukraine and the Russian Federation. This illegal activity was driven by the price differences between

#### Fuel declaration implemented in Latvia

The government of Latvia continues to fight illegal trafficking of diesel fuel and intends to monitor transport of fuel from the neighbouring third countries. Starting from 2017, in light of the amendments to the law on customs, lorry drivers arriving from the Russian Federation and Belarus will be obliged to declare the amount of fuel in the tank right at the border. According to Latvia's Finance Ministry, these measures should increase the sale of fuel in the country and bring around EUR 400 000 annually into the treasury.

Source: gpk.gov.by, 5 December 2016; e100.eu, 10 November 2016

EU Member States and their third-country neighbours. In many cases, smugglers crossed the border several times a week to fill up the large or illegally extended petrol tanks of their private vehicles. This type of smuggling not only caused substantial losses in tax revenue, but also significantly increased the workload of border guards. Frequently, fuel smugglers contributed to the long queues at BCPs at the common borders.

### Stolen motor vehicles and boats

The number of stolen vehicles detected at the EU's external borders as reported to Frontex in the context of Frontex Joint Operations showed a decrease from over 350 in 2015 to 300 in 2016. Around 55% of these cases were reported at the EU's eastern borders. Theft cases included cars, lorries, trailers, boats, excavators, agricultural machines and motorbikes.

The number of stolen vehicles regularly reported at the EU's eastern borders decreased from 215 in 2015 to 167 in 2016. According to JORA, most stolen cars were about to leave the EU through Polish BCPs to Ukraine, particularly via Medyka and Dorohusk, both located on or in the vicinity of the economically important European route connecting Western Europe with the countries of Central Asia. BCP Terespol at the Polish-Belarusian border was the third most frequently used BCP as regards transport of stolen vehicles. Mercedes, BMW and VW were the top three reported brands.

Most car thefts were detected by matching SIS II, the Interpol and national theft data with the Vehicle Identification Numbers (VIN). However, car thieves applied various *modi operandi* to conceal the identity of the stolen vehicles, such as manipulating VIN or transporting the car in parts.

In addition, a widespread phenomenon of using false documents such as power of attorney, vehicle registration certificate and car insurance was reported by the EaP-RAN countries.

### Illicit drugs and prohibited substances

Typically, hashish and synthetic drugs were trafficked out of the EU, whereas heroin and cocaine were smuggled into the EU as a destination region or as a transit route to the Russian market.

### Cannabis from Morocco towards the Russian Federation

Herbal cannabis (marijuana) and cannabis resin (hashish) are the two main cannabis products found on the European drug market. Herbal cannabis consumed in Europe is both cultivated domestically and trafficked from third countries. The herbal cannabis produced in Europe is mostly cultivated indoors.

According to the EMCDDA European Drug Report 2016<sup>5</sup>, cannabis accounted for over 75% of drug seizures in Europe, Morocco being the main provider of the drug, although its production is in decline. Spain reported around two-thirds of the total quantity of cannabis resin seized in Europe.

In September 2016, in an operation coordinated by Guardia Civil, 19 tonnes of hashish were seized on a cargo ship and 12 persons arrested in the operational area of the JO Indalo.

The eastern European borders were also affected by the flow of these drugs, which were transported from Spain via

### Hashish smuggled in compartments of passenger cars (via the Baltic States)

In October 2016, two Estonian citizens carrying over 200 kg of hashish (worth more than EUR 2 million) were detained by the State Revenue Service of Latvia at the border with Lithuania. The drugs were discovered in two cars: hidden in a secret trunk compartment of a Nissan and stashed in the interior and under the hood of a Ford.

Source: [www.lsm.lv](http://www.lsm.lv), 20 October 2016

the EU towards the Russian Federation and Ukraine. In 2016, seizures of hashish were recorded by the law-enforcement authorities in the Baltic States and Poland.

### Cocaine from South America

While Spain continues to be the country seizing most of the cocaine, there are signs of an increasing diversification of trafficking routes into Europe, with seizures of the drug recently reported in ports of the Eastern Mediterranean, Baltic and Black Sea. However, according to available data, these routes remained of minor importance. Cocaine is also smuggled on pleasure boats, through container shipments (where it is often hidden under legitimate goods) and by air freight.

### Hashish hidden in a false car floor

In March 2016, Spanish police dismantled a drug ring that used cars fitted with false floors to transport huge amounts of hashish from Spain to the Russian Federation, Poland and Estonia. 1.2 tonnes of hashish were seized in separate raids across Europe. Five suspects were arrested in Spain, another seven in Estonia and three were detained in Poland.

Source: [www.thelocal.es](http://www.thelocal.es), 29 March 2016



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5 EMCDDA (2016), *European Drug Report: Trends and Developments*, p. 65

For instance, in July 2016, Romanian police seized 2.5 tonnes of cocaine, worth at least EUR 600 million, hidden in Colombian banana containers that arrived in the Black Sea port of Constanța.

Latvia, in turn, seized a drug shipment of some 60 kg of cocaine worth an estimated EUR 6 million, which was found in an abandoned hangar in a suburb of Riga. The drugs were hidden in a shipment of charcoal from Paraguay that was sent via a company registered in Lithuania but owned by a Latvian national.

### Heroin from Afghanistan

According to the EMCDDA, most of the heroin consumed in the EU is produced in Afghanistan and transported along a variety of routes. These include the one

through Turkey and the Balkan countries; the northern route, which leads through Central Asia and the Russian Federation; and the southern route via the Persian Gulf by sea, which sometimes includes transit through Africa.

The latest annual statistics on seizures showed that more heroin was seized in Turkey alone than in all EU Member States combined. The lack of large seizures within most countries of South-Eastern Europe points to a number of undetected shipments. On this route, heroin is often smuggled into the EU in small and medium amounts by criminals posing as individual travellers. Regular cooperation between border guards and customs authorities is of particular importance for the detection of drugs smuggled using such *modus operandi*.

### Heroin smuggled under the guise of onions

A resident of Tajikistan transported heroin from Kyrgyzstan to the Russian Federation (Yekaterinburg) in a shipment of vegetables. The imported drugs were disguised as onions, in which sealed bags of heroin were wrapped in adhesive tape. 25 kg of heroin (worth USD 500 000) was hidden in the guise of 230 bulbs, which were mixed with genuine onions.

Source: [belsat.eu](http://belsat.eu), 21 June 2016

### Marijuana smuggled in a fuel tank of a lorry (via Germany and Poland)



The Polish Border Guard discovered 42 kg of marijuana (in 175 plastic bags) hidden in the fuel tank and two spare wheels of a lorry at the Polish-German border at the BCP Świecko. The drugs of an estimated value of EUR 312 000 (PLN 1 400 000) were purchased in the Netherlands and Spain to be further transported to and distributed in Poland. The driver, who is a Polish national, was supposed to receive around EUR 5 555 (PLN 25 000) from the person who hired him to transport the drugs.

Source: [www.wm.strazgraniczna.pl](http://www.wm.strazgraniczna.pl), 13 January 2017

## 4.2. Significant transiting irregular migration flows originating from outside the wider EaP-RAN region

EaP-RAN countries and the Russian Federation are used as transit countries to the EU/Schengen area by irregular migrants originating from outside the CIS and EaP countries, including the Middle East, South Asia, South-East Asia and Africa. Well-organised facilitation networks and well-established routes play an essential role in choosing the Russian Federation, Ukraine or Belarus as transit countries on the way to the EU.

Nevertheless, the routes along the EU's eastern borders are still less often transited by non-regional migrants as they usually face logistical difficulties and higher costs compared with regional migrants. The transit of non-regional migrants via EaP-RAN countries and the Russian Federation is perceived less of a threat than their transit via other migration routes (e.g. via Turkey and the Western Balkans).

In general, illegal border-crossing between BCPs remained the main *modus operandi* identified among non-regional migrants in the EaP-RAN region. Transiting flows and illegal border-crossings are often followed by further secondary movements within the Schengen area.

### Illegal border-crossing between BCPs

At the common borders, there was a 34% drop in the number of detected illegal border-crossings of non-regional migrants reported by EU Member States. Over 86% of detections were reportedly linked to irregular migration, with citizens of Afghanistan and Vietnam comprising the largest share of the flow.

At the Eastern Partnership and external borders, there were 208 detections of illegal border-crossing by non-regional migrants. Ukraine reported the majority of such detections, followed by Georgia and Azerbaijan. Migrants from Bangladesh constituted a majority, followed by Sri Lankans, Turks and Iranians.

### Routes

Non-regional migrants used a variety of air and land routes to reach the EU. It is estimated that facilitation networks as well as large non-regional communities in the EaP-RAN countries and the Russian Federation were the key factor behind the decision to transit via the EU's eastern borders.

The airports in the Russian Federation (mainly in Moscow) were most frequently chosen as a transit point by migrants on the way to the EU via the EU's eastern borders. The well-established routes leading via the Russian Federation or via Belarus and the Baltic States were most frequently used by organised migration of Vietnamese citizens.

As regards other routes from the Russian Federation chosen by non-regional migrants, the Ukrainian Zakarpattia region (bordering with four EU Member States: Hungary, Poland, Romania and Slovakia) was frequently transited on the way to the EU after crossing the Russian-Ukrainian green border illegally.

In 2016, Ukrainian airports also gained importance. While transiting the airports on the way to the EU, non-regional migrants (who were often in

possession of false or fraudulently obtained documents) used a wide range of flight connections.

In general, the available statistical data on illegal border-crossings of non-regional migrants clearly indicate that the routing from Ukraine through the Zakarpattia region was generally preferred by OCGs trafficking Afghans, Indians, Bangladeshis, Sri Lankans, Syrians and Turks.

### Modus operandi

As indicated by EaP-RAN experts, illegal border-crossings of non-regional migrants tend to be facilitated. The use of local residents is still regarded as less risky and makes investigation of facilitation networks and their dismantlement more difficult. Nevertheless, the level of their involvement in trafficking through bordering areas differs and depends on the transiting country.

### Seasonality

With regard to the common borders, EaP-RAN data (reported on both sides of the common border) show seasonal fluctuations of illegal border-crossings, which peaked in September 2016. A visible change illustrated by a decreasing number of detections during the summer period is worth mentioning in contrast to the seasonality of 2015 (see Fig. 16). Seasonal movements of non-regional irregular migrants in 2016 were affected in general by the temporary reintroduction of border control at the Polish border sections constituting the EU's internal borders (from 4 July until 2 August). As a result of the implemented measures, August 2016 saw an unusually low number of non-regional illegal border-cross-

ing detections compared with the same month of 2015. The highest number of detections, in turn, was reported in September 2016, after temporary border control at the EU's internal border sections were ceased by Poland.

Indeed, the most significant drop in the number of non-regional migrants was observed at the common borders

with Belarus and the Russian Federation, a typical route used in the smuggling of Vietnamese towards the Baltic States and Poland.

As usual, the curbed irregular migration flow transiting the green border in the final months of the year was strictly connected to the worsening weather conditions.

### Composition of the flow

In 2016, the composition of non-regional irregular migration flow at the common borders (detected between BCPs on both sides of the border) included a variety of nationalities and was dominated by Vietnamese, Afghans and Indians. Together, these three top nationalities accounted for only 36% and were followed by citizens of Sri Lanka, Turkey, Bangladesh, Syria and Pakistan.

### Afghan migrants

According to the data reported by both sides of the border, the number of Afghans detected for illegal border-crossing at the common border dropped significantly (by 65%), mostly at the common border with Ukraine.

It is estimated that the operation 'Frontier-2016', launched by the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine, significantly limited the facilitated movements of Afghans via Ukraine's Zakarpattia region - the route frequently used by this nationality.

At the Eastern Partnership and external borders, there were only three Afghan migrants crossing the border illegally between BCPs in 2016, reported

Figure 6. In 2016, most detections of non-regional migrants were made in September, in contrast to the peak during the summer season of 2015

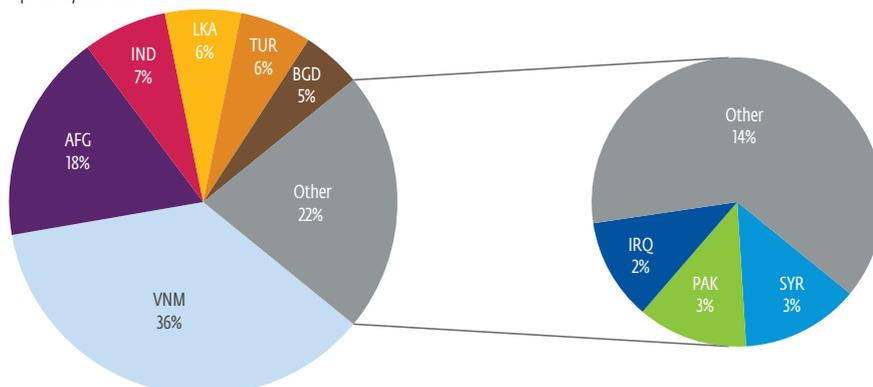
Monthly detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs of non-regional migrants reported on both sides of the common border in 2016 compared with 2015



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

Figure 7. In 2016, non-regional migration flow was dominated by citizens of Vietnam, Afghanistan and India

Composition of the non-regional migration flow detected for attempted or successful illegal border-crossings at the common border sections reported by both sides in 2016



Source: EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

### Four Vietnamese migrants and a Russian driver died on the way to the Russian-Latvian border

On 17 December 2016, at midnight, four Vietnamese and one Russian citizen died in a car accident in the Russian Federation, near the village of Mavrino in the Pskov region (around 40 km from the Russian-Latvian border). The car (Mazda MPV), which was driven by a Russian national and carried a total of 11 Vietnamese would-be migrants, collided with a Renault lorry at 433 km of the St. Petersburg-Nevel highway.

Source: polit.ru; www.topnews.ru, 17 December 2016

by Belarus and Ukraine, at their respective borders with Ukraine and Moldova.

### **Vietnamese migrants**

In 2016, according to data reported by both sides of the border, the number of illegal border-crossings of Vietnamese at the common borders decreased by 24% compared with 2015. The Latvian-Russian border section was most affected and was followed by the Lithuanian-Belarus border.

The level of irregular migration flow from Vietnam decreased significantly at all common borders with Belarus and the Russian Federation during the summer months and reached a peak in September 2016.

It is estimated that facilitation networks temporarily ceased facilitated movements of Vietnamese via the Baltic States and Poland and/or redirected non-regional migration flow to other common borders of the EU due to the temporary reintroduction of border control at the EU's internal borders of Poland.

Vietnamese were the most frequently facilitated nationality of migrants illegally crossing the EU's eastern borders between BCPs. Russian citizens constituted the majority of apprehended facilitators of Vietnamese along the EU's eastern land borders.

Intensified movements of Vietnamese were also observed within the Schengen area, in the Baltic States and Poland.

Those migrants who managed to cross the EU's external borders continued their movements toward Western Europe targeting countries with significant Vietnamese communities such as Germany, Poland, France, and the UK.

A sizeable Vietnamese community and well-established Vietnamese organised crime groups in the Russian Federation, EaP-RAN countries and EU Member States play an essential role in facilitating the flow of irregular labour force from Vietnam towards the EU. In addition, deteriorating work and living conditions of migrants in the Russian Federation are pushing them out of the Russian labour market, triggering more movements towards the EU. This is not likely to change in the near future.

### 4.3. Sustained irregular migration flows from the EaP-RAN region, including CIS and EaP countries

The threat of an irregular migration flow originating from CIS<sup>6</sup> and EaP<sup>7</sup> countries (regional migrants) was influenced mainly by the economic situation and political changes in the migrants' countries of origin or residence. Due to the geographic proximity to the EU and the Russian Federation, regular heavy traffic and sizeable labour migration flows, prompted by different motivations, were observed. Furthermore, the migrants used diverse *modi operandi*. As regards the main trends in irregular migration, the year 2016 did not differ from the recent years. The threat of illegal border-crossing for the purpose of migration remained relatively low, while the threat of abuse of legal travel channels (asylum misuse, overstaying, obtaining visas under false pretences) was considerable.

#### Illegal border-crossing between BCPs

Regional migrants, by contrast to the transiting non-regional flow, cross the border illegally for the purpose of profitable cross-border criminal activities rather than irregular migration.

At the common borders, there was a 20% drop in the number of illegal border-crossings of regional migrants reported by both sides of the EU's eastern border. Over 60% of the reported detections were associated with smuggling or 'other' reasons (including fishing, tourism, etc.). As regards detected nationals,

Ukrainians ranked first followed by Russians and Georgians.

At the Eastern Partnership and external borders, the citizens of Ukraine, Moldova and the Russian Federation were the top three regional nationalities detected for illegal border-crossing reported by EaP-RAN countries.

Importantly, most cases of illegal border-crossing could be attributed to local residents and, to a large extent, were not connected to migration.

#### Illegal border-crossing at BCPs and the abuse of legal travel channels

Similar to the previous year, the abuse of legal travel channels was one of the most common *modi operandi* reported among regional migrants (i.e. from CIS and EaP countries) in 2016. Migrants fre-

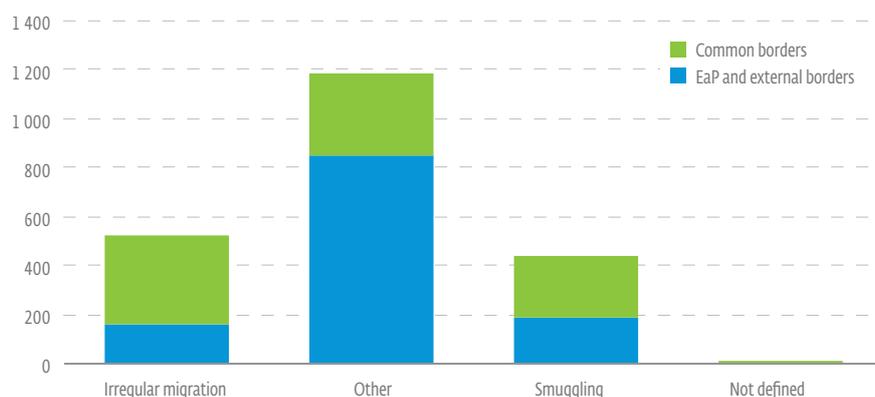
quently used fraudulently obtained visas and abused asylum procedures in the attempt to enter the EU. Even though the magnitude of this threat cannot be measured simply by analysing such indicators as refusals of entry and illegal stay, the changes in them indicate relevant patterns of irregular migration.

As much as 99.5% of refusals of entry reported by FRAN members at the EU's eastern land borders were issued to regional nationals. The refusals issued at the EU's eastern borders accounted for 35% of the EU's total, which points to continued attempts to abuse legal entry at the common borders. As regards nationalities, refusals issued to Russians increased significantly (by 54%) while those issued to Georgians and Armenians decreased considerably (by 85% and 55%, respectively).

Detections of illegal stay of regional migrants reported by all EU Member States and Schengen Associated Countries showed a 22% increase compared

Figure 8. Detections of the citizens of CIS and EaP countries at the common borders were related to irregular migration, while at the EaP and external borders were mostly related to smuggling or 'other' reasons

Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs of citizens of CIS and EaP countries by purpose, reported by the countries from both sides of the common border and by the EaP and external borders



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

6 Commonwealth of Independent States

7 Eastern Partnership

with 2015. Poland reported the largest number of detections of illegal stay, followed by Germany, Hungary, France and the Czech Republic. Importantly, detections of illegally staying regional migrants (from EaP and CIS countries) in the EU Member States with no common land border with Belarus, Moldova, Ukraine or the Russian Federation indicate possible secondary movements from the common borders further to EU Member States.

### Citizens of Ukraine

As a country of origin, Ukraine has been experiencing persistent outflow of its citizens towards the EU. The movements are reported in the context of circuitous routing and document fraud rather than illegal border-crossing. The scale of their migratory movements will depend on how the situation develops in the eastern Ukraine as well as on the political and economic outcome of the conflict.

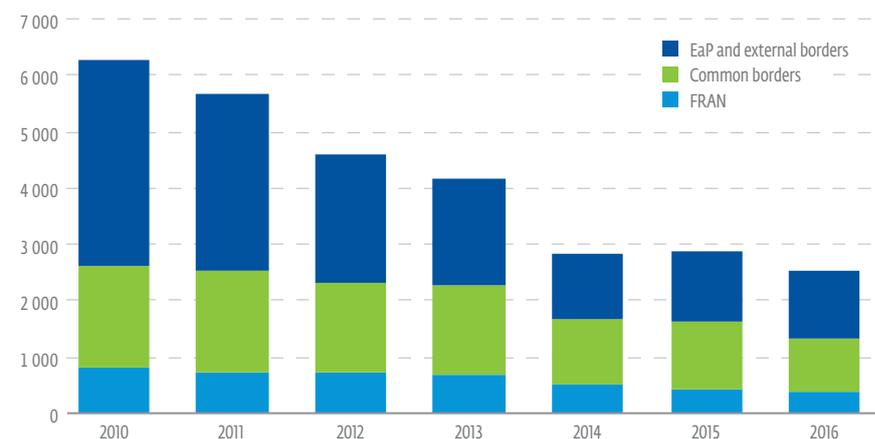
In 2016, the number of illegal border-crossings between BCPs by Ukrainians was very low. Out of 138 illegal border-crossings detected at the EU's eastern borders, only 57 were linked to irregular migration. Moreover, there was a significant drop in the number of asylum applications lodged by Ukrainians in EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries.

However, it can still be estimated that the majority of Ukrainian nationals planning to move to the EU use regular travel channels so that they can stay and work in the EU as regular migrants. As some of them are reluctant to return home due to economic or political reasons, the risk of visa abuse seems to be growing. Indeed, there was a 30% increase recorded in the number of detections of illegally staying Ukrainians. Furthermore, 60% of them were made on exit at the external land border, in vast majority at the border with Ukraine, which in fact constituted voluntary returns to Ukraine.

Indeed, EU Member States continued to report the use of fraudulently obtained visas and the use of visas for

Figure 9. The number of citizens of CIS and EaP countries detected for illegal border-crossing was systematically decreasing over the past few years at all border sections covered by the EaP network

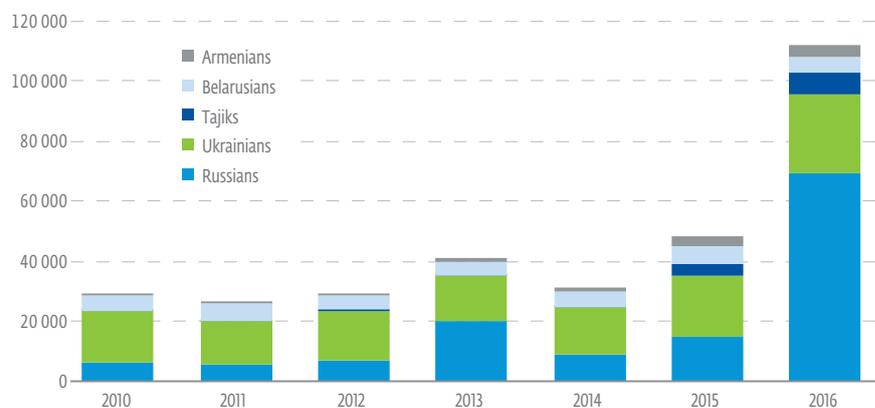
Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs of citizens of CIS and EaP countries reported by FRAN members along the EU's eastern borders, both sides of the common EU's eastern borders and by the EaP countries at their external borders in 2010-2016



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

Figure 10. The total number of refusals of entry issued to top five regional nationals at the EU's eastern borders fluctuated over the indicated period of 2010-2016, with the year 2016 showing a significant increase in the number of Russians, followed by Tajiks and Ukrainians

Top five regional migrants refused entry to the EU/Schengen area as reported by FRAN members at the EU's eastern borders between 2010-2016



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

purposes other than those stated in the applications. The practice of using counterfeit supporting documents is likely to continue as it is well organised by individuals or companies providing visa applicants with the necessary documents, such as invoices, vouchers, false bank statements, employment status certificates and false invitation letters. This *modus operandi* is likely to remain significant as the security features of the actual

travel documents are harder to falsify than those of supporting documents.

Moreover, in line with the phenomenon of visa abuse by Ukrainians, the number of refusals of entry issued by EU Member States at the EU's eastern borders increased in 2016. The main reasons for refusals did not change and the lack of appropriate documentation justifying the purpose and conditions of stay was still the most common one.

## Citizens of Tajikistan

In 2016, a new phenomenon was observed at the EU's eastern borders, namely the surge in the number of arriving Tajiks. A significant number of citizens of Tajikistan was reported as refused entry to the EU in 2016 at the EU's eastern borders. Indeed, the refusals issued to Tajiks by the EU/Schengen countries almost doubled compared with 2015 (from 3 628 in 2015 up to 7 099 in 2016).

Moreover, asylum applications lodged by Tajiks in EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries were also on the increase. In 2016, the number of applications more than doubled compared with 2015 (from 983 in 2015 up to 2 987 in 2016). Germany registered the highest number of Tajiks. The number of applications lodged in Germany comprised 65% of EU's total of Tajik applications, while a 28% share of applications was submitted in Poland.

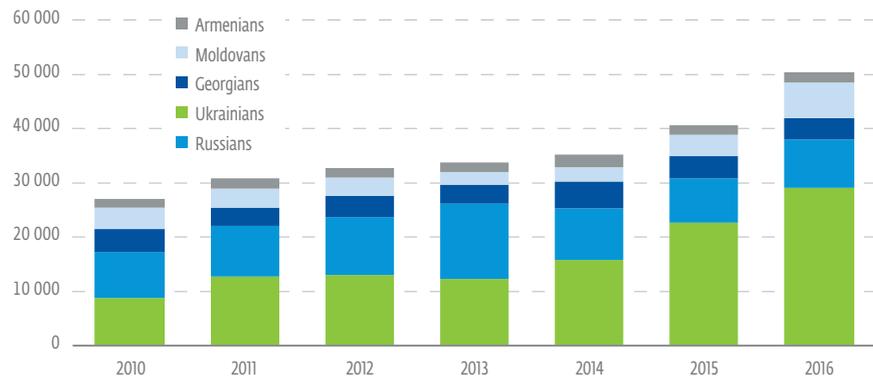
Since Tajiks can travel to Belarus and the Russian Federation without a visa, Poland is the closest EU Member State from where they can try and reach other EU countries. A large number of Tajiks followed in the footsteps of numerous Russians and attempted to enter Poland from Belarus.

Importantly, there were significant 'pull factors' affecting the migration flow of Tajiks towards the EU. First of all, Tajikistan, which is one of the poorest countries of Central Asia with a high level of unemployment, faces mass emigration.

As the economy of Tajikistan is heavily dependent on remittances received from Tajik migrants working in the Russian Federation, the Russian economic crisis seriously affected the state of economy in Tajikistan. Also, the situation of Tajik workers in the Russian Federation has been deteriorating. The depreciation of rouble made working in the Russian Federation much less profitable and with the migrants' wages almost halved, remittances sent home diminished signif-

Figure 11. **The overall number of detections of illegal stay in EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries of the main regional migrant nationalities increased systematically, with a growing share of Ukrainians, Russians and Moldovans in 2016**

Detections of illegal stay of citizens of top five CIS and EaP countries reported by all EU Members States and Schengen Associated Countries in 2010-2016



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

icantly. An increase in the cost of living, new requirements imposed on migrants (i.e. passing Russian language and history tests or buying health insurance) as well as higher fees for work permits or temporary lack of work in the Russian Federation forced some Tajiks to go back to their home country.

Finally, the political atmosphere in Tajikistan is rather tense with many Tajiks fleeing persecution.

The arrival of Tajiks at the EU's eastern borders coincided with the crack-down on the political opposition in Tajikistan and the aftermath of the financial crisis in the Russian Federation. Moreover, the restrictive immigration legislation as well as new requirements for foreign workers have made working in the Russian Federation much harder or less profitable for Tajiks. Even though thousands of them were forced to leave the Russian Federation, it is estimated that they will come back to this country to work after the crisis is over, similar to the situation in 2008-2009 when the number of Tajik workers in the Russian Federation decreased by 20-30%.

Currently, there is little evidence to suggest that Tajik migration to Poland and Germany may turn into a vast exo-

dus from Central Asia. The rate of the outflow of Tajik migrants from the Russian Federation and Tajikistan towards the EU is likely to depend on many 'push' and 'pull factors', including the willingness of Tajiks to move to the EU, the scarcity of Tajik diasporas in Europe as well as the demand on the European labour markets.

## Citizens of the Russian Federation

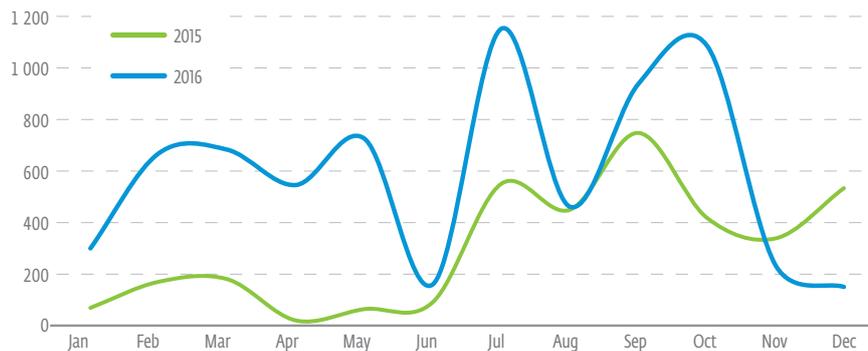
Migration from the North Caucasus, especially from Chechnya, to Europe is not a new phenomenon. The majority of migrants make their attempt to enter Poland to further travel to the countries of Western Europe, mainly Germany, Belgium, Austria and France. The abuse of legal travel channels was clearly the main *modus operandi* used by irregular migrants from the Russian Federation to enter the EU.

In 2016, there were only 119 detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs by Russian citizens reported by FRAN members at the common borders, 66 of which were connected with irregular migration.

By contrast, there was a large number of refusals of entry issued to Russian

**Figure 12. Refusals of entry issued to citizens of Tajikistan at the EU's eastern border almost doubled in 2016 compared with 2015 with peaks recorded in July and October. Poland reported the vast majority of cases at its borders with Belarus and Ukraine**

Refusals of entry issued to Tajik citizens at the EU's eastern border reported by EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries on a monthly basis in 2015 and 2016



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

**Figure 13. Asylum applications of Tajik citizens in 2016 increased significantly compared with 2015. Germany registered the highest number of applications lodged by Tajiks, followed by Poland**

Asylum applications of Tajik citizens reported by EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries on a monthly basis in 2015 and 2016



Source: FRAN and EaP-RAN data as of 13 February 2017

citizens at the EU's eastern borders. In 2016, the scale of this phenomenon increased with over fourfold rise in the reported number of refusals.

Increased movements of Russian citizens (of Chechen origin) which were observed starting from the beginning of 2016 resemble a similar phenomenon of 2013, when the migrants arrived with-

out visas and applied for asylum. Later on, when they reached Germany, they applied for asylum again. In 2016, the situation repeated itself and both Poland and Germany reported an increasing and coinciding number of asylum applications submitted by the citizens of the Russian Federation.

## 5. Outlook

### Irregular migration

No major changes are expected in the irregular migration flow from CIS<sup>8</sup> and EaP<sup>9</sup> countries (regional migrants) towards the EU. Thus, the abuse of legal travel channels and possibly also of the system of international protection will still be the *modus operandi* of choice.

As regards non-regional migrants, well-organised facilitation networks will continue to ensure a steady flow of migrants originating from the Middle East, South Asia, South-East Asia and Africa. Facilitated migration of Vietnamese transiting the Russian Federation via the Baltic States is not expected to subside. In addition, the same route may be used more frequently by the facilitated migration flow of Bangladeshis.

In any case, the Russian Federation will have a significant influence on migratory movements affecting both the EU and EaP countries and Moscow might be tempted to use this influence for political gain.

### Cross-border crime

The scale of smuggling of excise goods will not be reduced significantly in the foreseeable future, considering the existing price differentials and the poor economic situation in Ukraine and the Russian Federation.

On the contrary, smuggling may even intensify if the profitability increases in the coming year. Furthermore, cigarette smuggling in cargo trains may become even more common given that well-organised OCGs consider this a low-risk, high-profit activity.

### Ukrainian crisis

As the conflict in Ukraine is entering its fourth year, the security situation in the eastern part of the country remains volatile and tense. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission still reports ceasefire violations in the eastern Ukraine, including increased use of weapons prohibited under the terms of the Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements. The disengagement process has been stalled and the conflict seems to be frozen for the foreseeable future.

The scale of Ukrainian migratory movements will depend on the situation in the eastern Ukraine as well as on further political and economic developments. It can be still assessed that the majority of Ukrainian nationals planning to move to the EU will use regular travel channels to stay and work in EU Member States as regular migrants.

#### Visa-free entry to the EU for Georgian citizens entered into force

From 28 March 2017, Georgian citizens with biometric passport can travel visa-free to the Schengen area for business, tourist or family purposes and stay there for 90 days in any 180-day period.

### Visa-free entry to the EU for Georgian and Ukrainian citizens

It cannot be excluded that some EU Member States will face challenges posed by the inflow of labour migration. The number of migrants working illegally in the EU might increase, as more citizens of Ukraine and Georgia searching for better economic opportunities will be tempted to overstay the legal period of stay resulting from the visa exemption.

Moreover, people who enter the EU under visa-free regime with the intention to migrate may increasingly present false supporting documents at BCPs. As regards fraudulently obtained visas, their number will most probably decrease; however, as Schengen visas will still be needed to work and live in the EU legally, this phenomenon will not disappear completely.

Finally, it may be assessed that, in the short term, there will be a higher number of illegal border-crossings by Ukrainian and Georgian citizens attempting to enter the Schengen area between BCPs for the purpose of migration. In the longer term, however, more individuals with existing entry bans may be willing to attempt illegal entry to the EU via its eastern borders.

#### Visa-free entry to the EU for Ukrainian citizens entered into force in June 2017

Starting from 11 June 2017, Ukrainians with biometric passports are authorised to enter the EU (except for the UK and Ireland) without a visa for 90 days in any 180-day period. Ukrainians are also able to access the following non-EU Schengen countries: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland without a visa.

8 Commonwealth of Independent States

9 Eastern Partnership

## 6. Statistical annex

### LEGEND

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

**Source:** EaP-RAN and FRAN data as of 13 February 2017,  
unless otherwise indicated

### Annex Table 1. **Illegal border-crossings between BCPs**

Detections reported by Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries along the EU's eastern border, by purpose of illegal border-crossing and top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Purpose of Illegal Border-Crossing</b>					
Irregular migration	1 868	2 686	1 931	51	-28
Other	1 332	1 356	1 269	34	-6.4
Smuggling of goods	396	481	449	12	-6.7
Not specified	125	652	135	3.6	-79
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Ukraine	990	1 255	1 163	31	-7.3
Vietnam	345	759	583	15	-23
Moldova	446	321	334	8.8	4.0
Russian Federation	334	306	284	7.5	-7.2
Afghanistan	356	796	279	7.4	-65
India	17	30	113	3.0	277
Sri Lanka	29	72	109	2.9	51
Georgia	376	345	108	2.9	-69
Belarus	100	113	98	2.6	-13
Turkey	22	55	94	2.5	71
Others	706	1 123	619	16	-45
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 721</b>	<b>5 175</b>	<b>3 784</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-27</b>

## Annex Table 2. Illegal border-crossings at BCPs

Detections reported by Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries along the EU's eastern border, by purpose of illegal border-crossing and top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Clandestine/Other</b>					
Other	1 313	18 171	25 225	100	39
Clandestine	13	6	31	0.1	n.a.
<b>Purpose of Illegal Border-Crossing</b>					
Other	901	17 659	24 633	98	39
Smuggling of goods	300	378	503	2.0	33
Irregular migration	109	137	87	0.3	-36
Not specified	16	3	33	0.1	n.a.
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Ukraine	564	17 096	24 226	96	42
Moldova	472	635	717	2.8	13
Romania	49	83	119	0.5	43
Russian Federation	59	112	55	0.2	-51
Belarus	13	37	18	0.1	-51
Not specified	21	15	18	0.1	20
Bulgaria	8	12	10	0	-17
Armenia	1	27	9	0	-67
Turkey	2	13	8	0	-38
Poland	2	6	8	0	33
Others	135	141	68	0.3	-52
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 326</b>	<b>18 177</b>	<b>25 256</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>39</b>

### Annex Table 3. Facilitators

Detections reported by Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries along the EU's eastern border, by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Place of Detection</b>					
Land	110	189	330	99	75
Air	0	4	5	1.5	25
Inland	2	0	0		n.a.
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Russian Federation	14	66	70	21	6.1
Afghanistan	0	0	44	13	n.a.
India	0	1	32	9.6	n.a.
Belarus	15	21	27	8.1	29
Bangladesh	0	0	15	4.5	n.a.
Ukraine	17	19	14	4.2	-26
Pakistan	1	0	13	3.9	n.a.
Estonia	5	5	12	3.6	140
Cameroon	0	0	12	3.6	n.a.
Morocco	0	2	11	3.3	450
Others	60	79	85	25	7.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>335</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>74</b>

### Annex Table 4. Illegal stay

Detections reported by Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries along the EU's eastern border, by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Place of Detection</b>					
Land	23 673	33 216	38 470	83	16
Air	6 433	6 242	7 173	15	15
Sea	288	317	330	0.7	4.1
Between BCPS	141	381	248	0.5	-35
Inland	1 029	116	127	0.3	9.5
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Ukraine	9 824	14 801	18 679	40	26
Russian Federation	6 140	7 741	6 980	15	-9.8
Moldova	2 137	3 195	4 818	10	51
Georgia	2 465	2 610	2 496	5.4	-4.4
Azerbaijan	798	1 484	1 601	3.5	7.9
Belarus	1 394	1 407	1 582	3.4	12
Turkey	696	661	1 072	2.3	62
Armenia	639	776	720	1.6	-7.2
Hungary	408	635	662	1.4	4.3
Uzbekistan	957	500	602	1.3	20
Others	6 106	6 462	7 136	15	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>31 564</b>	<b>40 272</b>	<b>46 348</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>15</b>

## Annex Table 5. Refusals of entry

Refusals reported by Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries along the EU's eastern border, by border type and top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Border Type</b>					
Land	78 089	103 800	150 491	95	45
Air	5 952	5 997	5 236	3.3	-13
Sea	3 877	3 783	2 858	1.8	-24
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Russian Federation	24 458	27 269	77 303	49	183
Ukraine	22 264	28 054	35 956	23	28
Tajikistan	1 773	6 784	7 752	4.9	14
Moldova	6 768	6 760	6 418	4.0	-5.1
Belarus	5 510	6 257	5 990	3.8	-4.3
Armenia	1 776	4 656	4 073	2.6	-13
Georgia	5 784	5 268	2 470	1.6	-53
Lithuania	4 110	2 762	2 463	1.6	-11
Azerbaijan	1 357	3 880	2 157	1.4	-44
Kazakhstan	515	1 653	1 193	0.8	-28
Others	13 603	20 237	12 810	8.1	-37
<b>Total</b>	<b>87 918</b>	<b>113 580</b>	<b>158 585</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>40</b>

## Annex Table 6. Applications for asylum (FRAN and EaP-RAN data)

Applications for international protection reported by Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, and EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries along the EU's eastern border, by top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Afghanistan	10 107	58 726	12 347	24	-79
Russian Federation	3 225	8 015	8 499	16	6.0
Syria	9 926	77 159	7 075	14	-91
Iraq	1 780	33 362	5 461	10	-84
Pakistan	654	15 797	4 149	7.9	-74
Iran	573	3 811	1 619	3.1	-58
Ukraine	3 086	2 753	1 376	2.6	-50
Morocco	284	546	1 225	2.3	124
Tajikistan	122	573	971	1.9	69
Eritrea	2 997	3 647	962	1.8	-74
Others	34 830	52 643	8 673	17	-84
<b>Total</b>	<b>67 584</b>	<b>257 032</b>	<b>52 357</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-80</b>

## Annex Table 7. Persons using false documents

Fraudulent documents detected by Belarus, Moldova and Ukraine, by border type, document type and top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Border Type</b>					
Land	125	171	168	47	-1.8
Air	124	194	145	41	-25
Sea	35	34	38	11	12
Not specified	7	13	3	0.8	-77
<b>Document Type</b>					
Passport	239	350	328	93	-6.3
Visas	15	26	13	3.7	-50
ID cards	10	12	7	2.0	-42
Stamp	8	4	4	1.1	0.0
Unknown	16	19	2	0.6	-89
Others	3	1	0	0	n.a.
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Ukraine	56	47	107	30	128
Moldova	70	121	95	27	-21
India	12	11	15	4.2	36
Turkey	6	13	12	3.4	-7.7
Russian Federation	14	18	11	3.1	-39
Georgia	6	19	10	2.8	-47
Syria	27	27	9	2.5	-67
Tajikistan	5	5	9	2.5	80
Iran	14	9	8	2.3	-11
Egypt	8	8	7	2.0	-13
Others	73	134	71	20	-47
<b>Top Ten Countries of Issuance</b>					
Moldova	36	100	85	24	-15
Ukraine	59	50	73	21	46
Hungary	2	3	30	8.5	n.a.
India	12	11	14	4.0	27
Romania	25	27	13	3.7	-52
Tajikistan	3	12	11	3.1	-8.3
Turkey	10	10	9	2.5	-10
Bulgaria	7	13	9	2.5	-31
Israel	7	16	9	2.5	-44
Germany	1	4	7	2.0	75
Others	129	166	94	27	-43
<b>Total</b>	<b>291</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-14</b>

### Annex Table 8. **Illegal border-crossing between BCPs**

Detections reported by Azerbaijan and Georgia, by top ten nationalities

	2014	2015	2016	Share of total	% change on prev. year
<b>Top Ten Nationalities</b>					
Georgia	:	:	47	n.a.	n.a.
Bangladesh	:	:	44	n.a.	n.a.
Turkey	:	:	16	n.a.	n.a.
Azerbaijan	:	:	16	n.a.	n.a.
Iran	:	:	13	n.a.	n.a.
Russian Federation	:	:	10	n.a.	n.a.
Sri Lanka	:	:	8	n.a.	n.a.
Pakistan	:	:	5	n.a.	n.a.
Not specified	:	:	4	n.a.	n.a.
Uzbekistan	:	:	4	n.a.	n.a.
Others	:	:	37	n.a.	n.a.
<b>Total</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>:</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>n.a.</b>	<b>n.a.</b>

## Explanatory note

Detections reported for EU Member States for indicators Illegal border-crossing between BCPs, Illegal border-crossing at BCPs, Refusals of entry and Persons using false documents are detections at the common land borders on entry only. For Facilitators, detections at the common land borders on entry and exit are included. For Illegal stay, detections at the common land borders on exit only are included. For Asylum, all applications (land, sea, air and inland) are included.

For EaP-RAN countries, all indicators – save for Refusals of entry – include detections (applications) on exit and entry at the land, sea and air borders.

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





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**For Public Release**

Risk Analysis Unit

Frontex reference number: 15584/2017

**PDF version:**

TT-AM-17-001-EN-N  
ISBN 978-92-95205-97-0  
ISSN 2529-6647  
doi:10.2819/870001

Warsaw, July 2017