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NOTE

from:	Presidency
to:	Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum/Mixed Committee (EU-Iceland/Liechtenstein/Norway/Switzerland)
Subject:	EU Action on Migratory Pressures - A Strategic Response - 4th Biannual Update

I.   INTRODUCTION

The JHA Council approved the 'EU Action on Migratory Pressures - A Strategic Response' at its meeting on 26-27 April 2012[1].

According to the methodology agreed by SCIFA/Mixed Committee during the Irish Presidency to ensure the necessary follow-up to the EU Action, as set out in doc. 6443/13, Presidencies are responsible for coordinating the follow-up to the EU Action and its updating on a biannual basis. SCIFA/Mixed Committee shall provide the strategic oversight of the implementation of the key actions under the Strategic Priorities, and, based on an innovative approach, individual Member States have been encouraged to volunteer to monitor Strategic Priorities or elements within them.

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[1]   doc. 9650/12 MIGR 45 FRONT 67 COSI 25 COMIX 288.

The first biannual update was completed under the Cyprus Presidency in October 2012. The 2nd biannual update was completed under the Irish Presidency in June 2013 and the 3rd biannual update was completed under the Lithuanian Presidency in December 2013.

II. FOURTH BI-ANNUAL UPDATE OF THE EU ACTION ON MIGRATORY PRESSURES

For the purpose of the fourth biannual update, at the meeting of SCIFA/Mixed Committee on 17-18 February 2014, the Presidency presented some initiatives, as set out in doc. 6307/14, aimed at improving the methodology of the biannual updating process of the EU action on migratory pressures - A Strategic response - including a standardized harmonized form for contributions.

In order to fulfill the mandate given to SCIFA by the Council, as there has been no other SCIFA/Mixed Committee meeting during the current semester before the meeting on 5-6 May 2014, the updating process has been carried out in the form of a written procedure.

Following the meeting of SCIFA/Mixed Committee on 17-18 February 2014, delegations were invited to provide their input to the updating process of the EU Action regarding the implementation of the relevant activities as described in the Annex to doc. 17382/13 and the possible inclusion of the activities proposed for further consideration set out in doc. 17382/13 ADD 1, by 21 March 2014.

Based on the comments received by delegations, the Commission, FRONTEX and EASO, the Presidency prepared a preliminary version of the draft revised EU Action that on 7 April 2014 was circulated to delegations for further comments and suggestions by 18 April 2014.

Delegations have been invited, in the context of the updating process of the EU Action, to consult with the Presidency as well as, where appropriate, with delegations of other Member States involved, and with FRONTEX and EASO and to ensure appropriate coordination with relevant activities within the framework of the COSI "EU Policy Cycle".

On the basis of the contributions received, the Presidency has prepared a consolidated version of the updated EU Action, where the new text included is marked underlined, as set out in the Annex, with a view to its endorsement by SCIFA/Mixed Committee at its meeting on 5-6 of May 2014.

As regards in particular the new Strategic Priority VII on "Preventing illegal immigration from and via the Southern Mediterranean", its content would have to be defined at a later stage, with the inclusion, where appropriate, of relevant challenges, goals and activities, in conjunction with the follow-up activities to the work of the Task Force Mediterranean. Further reflection for this purpose would be required in collaboration with the Commission, in order to take into account relevant developments as regards the actions identified in the Communication from the Commission set out in doc. 17398/13 [1], and on the basis of the Staff Working Document that the Commission has announced to present with a view to reporting on the implementation of such actions at the Justice and Home affairs Council on 5-6 June 2014.

The Presidency has also included in ADD 1 to this document certain proposals regarding structural changes to the Strategic Priorities and Challenges in the EU Action which have not been included in the updated version at this stage, but are put forward for consideration for the purpose of the further update of the EU Action.

Based on the new methodology agreed, as set out in doc. 6307/14, the Presidency has also elaborated a descriptive part as set out in point III, analysing and summarizing the main developments as regards the various activities under the relevant Strategic Priorities and Challenges since the third bi-annual update of the EU Action.

III. DEVELOPMENTS AS REGARDS MIGRATORY PRESSURES SINCE THE THIRD BI-ANNUAL UPDATE OF THE EU ACTION ON MIGRATORY PRESSURES

Strategic Priority I - Strengthening cooperation with third countries of transit and origin on migration management

EU readmission policy remains an important priority in preventing and combating illegal immigration as a tool to ensure an effective return policy, with an emphasis on implementing those EU Readmission Agreements (EURA's) already in force and pursuing proceedings under the outstanding mandates for negotiating further such agreements.

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[1] COM (2013) 869 final of 4 December 2013

Developments in this respect since December 2013 include the entry into force on 1st April 2014 of the EURA with Armenia, which was signed on 19 April 2013, and the signature on 28 February 2014 of the EURA with Azerbaijan, foreseen to be concluded in spring 2014. Ratification procedures as regards the Readmission Agreement signed with Turkey on 16 December 2013 are ongoing and likely to be concluded in summer 2014. The Readmission Agreement with Cape Verde, already ratified by the EU, is awaiting ratification by Cape Verde. The situation regarding the implementation of the EU Readmission Agreement concluded with Pakistan in 2010 is still unsatisfactory and calls for further improvement. Negotiations for the conclusion of an EU Readmission Agreement have been launched with Belarus in January 2014, while efforts continue to rekindle readmission negotiations with China.

With a view to expanding dialogues for the conclusion of Readmission Agreements, possible new candidates for such agreements, were identified during the Cypriot Presidency, and include India, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Tunisia, Egypt and Afghanistan. The recent signature of the Mobility Partnership with Tunisia opens the way to engage in readmission negotiations with this country, while the establishment of such Partnership with Morocco is expected to re-launch the negotiations on the readmission agreement with this country as well.

Efforts by the EU institutions, Agencies and Member States in relation, aimed at the full implementation of EURAs, continue, and regular meetings of Joint Readmission Committees (JRC) with relevant third countries are held for this purpose.

Progress has been made as regards the establishment and development of Mobility Partnerships (MPs) with several third countries. As regards the Eastern Partnership countries, a MP has been successfully launched in December 2013 with Azerbaijan. Moreover, efforts continue in order to implement the European Council conclusions of 23-24 June 2011 and of 2-3 March 2012, emphasising the need to establish and expand a structured dialogue on migration, mobility and security with the Southern Mediterranean countries. In this context, a Mobility Partnership was signed with Morocco and Tunisia respectively in September 2013 and on 3 March 2014.

At the same time discussions on a draft Joint Declaration establishing a MP with Jordan have reached an advanced stage. The possibility of starting a Dialogue on Migration, Mobility and Security with Egypt continues to be explored, in spite of the difficult political situation in this country. In its GAMM implementation report for 2014, the Commission lists Belarus as a potential country with which a MP could be envisaged.

Mobility Partnerships have also been already established with Moldova, Cape Verde, Georgia and Armenia.

A Common Agenda on Migration and Asylum (CAMM), including elements on readmission, is currently being negotiated and expected to be established with Nigeria by the first half of 2014. With respect to the negotiations on a draft Joint Declaration on a CAMM with India, no progress has so far been achieved. A CAMM is a tool similar to MPs, with the main difference that it does not include a commitment to negotiate and conclude a readmission and a visa facilitation agreement.

Work continues in the context of the existing regional networks of cooperation on migration management in the Mediterranean, with examples like the "Seahorse Mediterranean network", established in 2013 in the framework of EUROSUR, and the "Africa- FRONTEX Intelligence Community"(AFIC), which is the intelligence network between FRONTEX and relevant African countries.

The existing cooperation with the Western Balkan countries on the prevention of illegal immigration, with a particular focus on the Hungarian-Serbian border, covers cross-border crimes related to illegal immigration, and includes support to voluntary return and reintegration programmes as well as assistance to asylum capacity building of Western Balkan countries. Since EASO and FRONTEX signed a Working Arrangement in 2012, interagency cooperation for this purpose has been enhanced. The annual activity Joint Operation Focal Points Land on the Western Balkans area 2013 were extended until the end of March 2014. An operational agreement between Serbia and Europol was signed in January 2014.

Regarding efforts on developing the "Silk Routes Partnership", the project "Support to the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration", led by Hungary under the Budapest Process", was launched on 1 February 2014 with the overall objective of strengthening the migration management capacities of the Silk Routes countries, and is foreseen to last for 36 months.

Initiatives are being carried out by FRONTEX in order to develop the VEGA Concept, aimed at enhancing effective protection measures for vulnerable persons (children and victims of trafficking of human beings) at external air, land and sea borders. Its first product will be a VEGA children manual, that will contain countermeasures for identifying children at risk and for the fight against related criminal activities.

Strategic Priority II- Enhanced border management at the external borders

Developments since December 2013 as regards the enhancement of border management at the external borders, include the adoption of Regulation 1052/2013 establishing EUROSUR, which has become operational on 2nd December 2013. Negotiations on the proposal for the establishment of rules for sea operations coordinated by FRONTEX were concluded in February 2014. The draft Regulation was adopted by the European Parliament on 16 April 2014 and is foreseen to be adopted by the Council in the beginning of May 2014. Signature is foreseen to take place by mid-May 2014.

As far as negotiations on the "Smart Borders Package" are concerned, the first reading of the proposals has been completed. In order to address certain concerns raised during the negotiations, the Commission has initiated a proof of concept exercise, which consists of a Commission-led study (as of February 2014) and a subsequent pilot-project envisaged to be carried out by eu-LISA in 2015.

FRONTEX is implementing its Programme of Work for 2014, as endorsed by its Management Board, with the view to support and coordinate Member States' activities aimed at strengthening the control and surveillance of external borders. FRONTEX has "inter alia" developed a set of indicators for regular monitoring of intra-Schengen flows and is planning to carry out an update of the Threat Risk analysis (TRA) on secondary movements in 2014. European Patrols Network (EPN) meetings continue to provide a forum for practitioners on questions related to the maritime domain.

In the context of the <u>cooperation between EASO and FRONTEX</u>, these two Agencies will implement a joint project aimed at promoting the participation of Morocco and Tunisia in the activities of these two Agencies. FRONTEX also aims at liaising with border guard authorities of Morocco and Tunisia, while it continues to co-operate with Europol and Interpol.

Strategic Priority III- Preventing illegal immigration from Turkey

Several initiatives aimed at preventing illegal immigration from Turkey have been undertaken at various levels. Regarding cooperation between the Greek and Turkish authorities, progress has been noticed in a number of areas during the last period of time.

In March 2014, <u>FRONTEX agreed with the Turkish authorities on a cooperation agenda to implement a series of activities within the framework of the Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2012.</u> FRONTEX also launched <u>Joint Operation Attica 2014</u> as of 31 March 2014 and <u>Joint Operation Poseidon Sea 2014</u> as of 1st May 2014. With regard to the Search and Rescue operations at the Greek-Turkish sea borders, the cooperation between the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre Piraeus and the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre in Ankara has been continuous and effective.

Monitoring of the <u>National Action Plan "Greece-Schengen"</u> launched in 2010 and concluded in December 2013 ended up in a positive assessment (see doc. 17092/13), and work on the implementation of the <u>Asylum and Migration Action Plan</u> continues.

The <u>dialogue on visa liberalization with Turkey</u> was initiated in parallel with the signature of the EU-Turkey Readmission Agreement on 16th December 2013, and will involve technical discussions and field visits aimed at assessing how Turkey fulfils the requirements set out in the "Roadmap towards visa-free regime with Turkey".

Contacts are on-going between the Republic of Bulgaria, the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey with a view to the conclusion of a draft agreement on establishing a trilateral common contact centre, on which a mutual consent has already been achieved.

Strategic Priority IV- Better tackling of abuse of legal migration channels

Attention is continuing to be paid to the prevention of illegal immigration and unfounded asylum applications as a consequence of visa liberalization.

Regulation (EU) 1289/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 December 2013 amending Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement was adopted and entered into force on 9 January 2014.

The Visa dialogue with Turkey is on-going, whereas the dialogue with Russia on visa liberalization is currently suspended. Moreover, visa liberalization Action Plans are on-going with Kosovo, Georgia and the Ukraine.

Strategic Priority V- Safeguarding and protecting free movement by prevention of abuse by third country nationals

Work is also continuing with a view to improving the understanding of the abuse of free movement and preventing the fraudulent acquisition and use of free movement rights by Third Country Nationals (TCNs), in particular as regards sham marriages, document fraud and in relation to the facilitation of illegal immigration and Trafficking of Human beings (THB).

The Commission on 3rd April 2014 has adopted guidelines for the application of Directive 2003/86/EC on the right to family reunification, as set out in COM (2014) 210 final. Work was finalised on a draft handbook addressing marriages of convenience between EU citizens and non-EU nationals prepared by the Commission in cooperation with the Member States in the framework of the FREEMO expert group, which is expected to be issued in spring 2014.

Strategic Priority VI- enhancing migration management, including cooperation on return practices

Efforts are continuing at EU and national level with a view to enhancing migration management systems in the Member States and improving the potentials of a common EU approach in the field of both voluntary and forced return.

On 28 March 2014, the Commission adopted a <u>Communication on EU Return Policy (doc. 8415/14), in which it indicates that all Member States have notified their national transposition measures on the Return Directive (Directive 2008/115/EC)</u>. Only one associated country, Iceland, has not yet notified full transposition. The Greek Presidency aims at adoption of Council conclusions on the Communication.

Following a <u>call for resettlement/humanitarian admission of Syrians in 2013-2014</u>, <u>several Member States</u>, such as DE, FI, SE, FR and AT, have confirmed that they <u>will receive Syrian refugees</u> on humanitarian admission or resettlement for 2013/2014.

<u>The European Migration network (EMN)</u> recently took over an enhanced role in providing a <u>platform for experts in the field of return and reintegration</u> (Return and reintegration Experts' Group -REG), which aims at improving the operational cooperation among the Member States.

Strategic Priority VII- Preventing illegal immigration from and via the Southern Mediterranean

Developments under this Strategic Priority will be reflected in the Staff Working document that the Commission intends to present to the Justice and Home Affairs Council on 5-6 June 2014 on the implementation of the actions foreseen in the context of the follow-up to the work of the Task Force Mediterranean.

IV.   CONCLUSIONS

At the meeting of SCIFA/Mixed Committee on 5-6 May 2014, the Committee will be invited to endorse the updated document "EU Action on migratory pressures - A Strategic Response", as set out in the Annex, and take note of the proposals requiring further consideration as set out in the Addendum to this document, as the basis for further proceedings under the incoming Presidency. The Committee will also be invited to take note of the descriptive part as set out in point III, analysing and summarizing the main developments as regards the various activities under the relevant Strategic Priorities and Challenges since the third bi-annual update of the EU Action.

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EU Action on Migratory Pressures – a Strategic Response

Preventing illegal immigration from and via the Southern Mediterranean countries

Strengthening cooperation with third countries of transit and origin on migration management

Enhancing migration management, including cooperation on return practices

EU Action

Enhanced border management at the external borders

Safeguarding and protecting free movement by prevention of abuse by third country nationals

Preventing illegal immigration from Turkey

Better tackling of abuse of legal migration channels

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VII. Strategic priority : Preventing illegal immigration from and via the Southern Mediterranean countries

EU Action on Migratory Pressures – a Strategic Response

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
I. Strategic priority area: Strengthening cooperation with third countries of transit and origin on migration management					
1. Preventing and combating illegal immigration by ensuring smooth and orderly return of illegal migrants between States, including respect for the obligation of each State under customary international law to readmit its own nationals.	EU readmission agreements as tools of an effective return policy in order to tackle illegal immigration. Initiation and continuation of negotiations on EU readmission agreements with relevant third countries, including further appropriate steps when negotiations stall.	**A:** Operationalising Council Conclusions of June 2011 defining an EU strategy on readmission (doc. 11260/11 MIGR 118). i. Launching a substantive discussion based on PRES questionnaire to identify new third countries, with which concluding an EU readmission agreement would be of EU interest, in particular with countries of origin of illegal immigration.	PRES, COM, WP on Migration (expulsion) / HLWG / SCIFA, EEAS PRES, COM	i) PRES synthesis in June 2012.	i) The results of theses discussions were reported in CY PRES update of the EU Action. Possible new candidates for EU Readmission agreements included: Afghanistan, India, Nigeria, Bangladesh, Tunisia and Egypt.
		ii. Preparation of a comprehensive overview of EU and Member States relations and agreements with third countries	PRES, COM	ii) 2013	ii) EU readmission policy remains an important priority, with the emphasis on implementing those EURA's already in force and completing outstanding mandates. The establishment of a Mobility Partnership with Morocco is expected to re-launch the negotiations on the readmission

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		eligible for negotiation of EU readmission agreements. iii. Discussion and consideration of the use and the content of proportional, tailor-made incentives offered to those identified third countries with which EU readmission agreements are to be negotiated, in combination with the principle of conditionality applied in an appropriate manner. iv. Clarification of Council's criteria regarding rules on accelerated procedures, transit operations, and obligations to readmit third country nationals and stateless persons, in order to assess how these issues should	PRES, COM PRES, COM	iii) 2013 iv) 2013	agreement. <u>First contacts with Morocco took place on 2/3 April 2014,in Rabat</u>. ■ <u>The signing of the</u> Mobility Partnership with Tunisia <u>on 3 March 2014. opens now also the way to engage in the readmission negotiations with that</u> . ■ <u>The possibility of starting a Dialogue on Migration, Mobility and Security with</u> Egypt <u>continues to be explored</u>. ■ <u>Discussions on a draft text establishing a Mobility Partnership with Jordan are at an advanced stage following a negotiating round which took place in Amman on March 12th. Agreement has not yet been reached</u>. ■ Efforts <u>continue to</u> be made to rekindle readmission negotiations with <u>China in the framework of the EU-China High Level Dialogue on Migration and Mobility, launched in October 2013</u>. ■ A readmission agreement with Armenia was signed on 19 April 2013 <u>and entered into force on 1 January 2014</u> . ■ <u>A readmission agreement with Azerbaijan was signed on 28 February 2014 . Following EP consent on 12 March 2014 and the completion of ratification procedures by Azerbaijan the agreement should be ready to be concluded and enter into force in spring 2014.</u> ■ <u>Readmission negotiations with Belarus were</u>

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		be taken into account on a case by case basis in EU readmission agreements with identified countries. v. Promotion and support of cooperation between countries of origin and transit to develop efficient readmission mechanisms, both within regions and on a bilateral level.	MS, COM *(Sweden)*		officially launched in January 2014 and a first round of technical negotiations is expected to follow in the first half of 2014. ▪ A readmission agreement with Turkey was signed on 16 December 2013 and the EP gave the consent for its conclusion of that agreement in February 2014.If the Turkish side accomplishes its ratification procedure within the similar timeframe as the one planned for the EU ratification, the agreement should enter into force by summer 2014. ▪ A readmission agreement was signed with Cape Verde on 18 April 2013 and was ratified by the EU . Ratification by Cape Verde is still awaited. ▪ The Pilot Project MONITOR was launched in January 2014, introducing a post-return system in Ukraine and Pakistan for a period of three years under the coordination of IOM,UNCHR and local partner organisations . ▪ Hellenic Presidency works together with COM on the implementation of VISA Liberalization Dialogue with Turkey. ▪ In the framework of the cooperation of MS with COM for the implementation of VLD, Greece supports COM on collecting information in relation to bilateral cooperation with Turkish authorities on readmission issues, as well. ▪ A Common Agenda on Migration and Asylum (CAMM), including elements on readmission is

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					currently being negotiated and expected to be established with Nigeria by the first half of 2014.
					▪ With respect to the negotiations on a draft Joint Declaration on a CAMM with India no progress has so far been achieved.
					▪ Developments on migratory trends from Algeria could lead in the future to consider the possibility of launching a dialogue on migration which could also include the commitment to the negotiation and conclusion of a Readmission Agreement with this country.
					While new negotiating directives are not at present an immediate priority the PRES and COM will continue to reflect on the shape of the readmission package with potential new candidates for EURA's including possible incentives and the appropriate principles to be enshrined in such agreements.
					Reflect on and possibly develop of a pilot cooperation on return involving listing the potential target countries and analysing the possible leverages both at the EU and MS level in order to improve the return cooperation.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
2. Ensure implementation of all EU readmission agreements to their full effect.	Full implementation of EU readmission agreements by third countries and Member States alike, facilitated by practical arrangements.	**A:** Further efforts by COM and MS in relation to relevant third countries aimed at the full implementation of EU readmission agreements that are not being fully implemented.	COM, MS	Continuous.	EU institutions agencies and Member States continue to apply pressure on certain third countries to fully implement EURA's. ▪ As regards Pakistan <u>further</u> readmission applications under the agreement were examined and approved following successful efforts by COM and EUDEL. <u>Of course, the situations still calls for improvement in particular for certain MS which have a large number of pending cases (e.g. Greece). The COM in cooperation with the MS and EU DEL undertakes every effort to this aim (the issue was also discussed with Pakistani side during the strategic dialogue meeting on 25 March).</u> Joint return flights were organised by FRONTEX most recently in April 2013. ▪ The <u>Second</u> JRC meeting took place in Islamabad in July 2013 ;<u>particular efforts will be undertaken to organise a </u>new <u>meeting</u> in Brussels possibly <u>before summer</u> 2014 <u>in order to address all the outstanding issues (pending Pakistani side reply)</u>. ▪ <u>Although the EU-Pakistan Readmission Agreement was signed in 2010, four years after, serious problems occurred in its smooth and effective implementation. For instance, Greece has submitted approximately 2.500 readmission requests from 2012 to the Embassy of Pakistan in Athens but the Embassy responds with enormous delays, and even when response is positive, only in a few cases travel documents will be issued</u>**.** ▪ <u>To this end, there is a need for an immediate call for a meeting of EU DEL Committee and take certain decision on the acceptance of the EU Travel Document by the Pakistani authorities</u>.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					▪ As regards Sri Lanka the first JRC was held in February 2013 and regular bilateral contacts have been increasing the impetus to implement the agreement fully.
		B: Full and effective use of Joint Readmission Committees, including, where applicable, active participation of Member States.	COM, MS	Continuous.	Regular JRC's have been promoted with cooperating third countries including, most recently, the following: ▪ JRC with Ukraine held on 15 May 2012 in Kiev. ▪ JRC with Moldova held on 12 June 2013 in Brussels. ▪ Second JRC with Pakistan held on 7 July 2013 in Islamabad. ▪ JRC with Russia held on 2 July 2013. ▪ JRC with Sri Lanka held on 18 February 2013 in Colombo. ▪ JRC with Georgia held on 26 February 2013 in Brussels.
	Ensuring effective implementation of Article 13 of the Cotonou agreement.	**C:** Coherent implementation of EU readmission agreements by Member States. Due attention should also be given to the implementation of bilateral readmission agreements or arrangements concluded by Member States when compatible with the EU readmission agreements.	MS	Continuous.	The introduction in some third countries of automated systems, through EU-supported capacity building projects, is expected to greatly improve consistency in implementing EURA's in the third countries concerned.
		D: Exercise pressure through diplomatic channels and other regular contacts to improve the cooperation of relevant third countries on	EEAS, COM, MS	Continuous.	Readmission will be an important element of the Common Agenda under discussion with India and new proposals to restart readmission negotiations with China are under examination. In addition, the issue of illegal migration including readmission, is regularly addressed in each of the seven regional dialogues under the GAMM umbrella, including the following: Rabat, MME, Prague, EaP,

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		readmission.			Budapest, CELAC, ACP.
		E: Further efforts by COM and MS to ensure that partner countries fully implement Article 13 of the Cotonou agreement, including through targeted dialogues with priority countries and follow-up on the recommendations as they are agreed	COM, MS	Continuous.	In April 2012 expert recommendations on readmission were endorsed by EU-ACP Ministers. As a concrete follow up, a regional seminar on readmission has been proposed by the EU and accepted by the ACP States The aim of the seminar is to provide for expert exchanges on specific <u>issues from both sides. The seminar was held on 29-30 April 2014.</u>
3. Enhancing the capacity of countries of origin and transit to manage mixed migration flows.	To equip the countries of first asylum with the necessary means to be able to guarantee refugees protection that meets international standards. To assist third countries to better manage mixed migratory flows. To avoid	**A:** Strengthening the use of Regional Protection Programmes and similar national initiatives aimed at long-term capacity building in the field of international protection, in order to provide protection to persons in need thereof as soon as possible after the initial displacement, and as close as possible to their home areas. Thus, enabling asylum seekers to apply for and find effective protection in their region of origin.	COM, MS	Continuous.	Following a call from Member States for establishment of Regional Protection Programmes in the Middle Eastern countries in order to respond to the Syrian crisis and the refugees' situation in the Country neighbouring Syria, the COM is working for the RPPs to be operational <u>in 2014.</u> In February 2013, Member State experts <u>conducted under DG HOME'S lead</u> extensive missions to Moldova, in the framework of the VLAP, organised by DG HOME. This mission <u>and the subsequent 4th and 5th Moldova VLAP progress reports from the second half of 2013 of the Commission concluded</u> that Moldova's asylum, border and migration management frameworks are in line with EU practices and have been well implemented. <u>Frontex is developing VEGA Concept to enhance effective protection measures for vulnerable persons/groups (children and victims of trafficking in human beings) at external air land and sea borders within a law enforcement approach oriented to fight against THB. Under this concept Frontex</u>

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
	secondary movements. To establish Mobility Partnerships with relevant third countries.				will extend cooperation with EU and non-EU Agencies as well as International Organisations (Europol, FRA, Interpol, UNCHR,IOM). The first product delivered will be VEGA Children Handbook (Air) containing countermeasures for identifying children at risk and fight against related transnational organized crime groups engaged in THB followed by the implementation of joint operation VEGA Children aiming to validate the correspondent operational Handbook on the field (EU international airports).
		B: Building capacity in third countries in order for them to better tackle the challenges of mixed migratory flows.	COM, MS	Continuous.	Building capacity in third countries is already a key element of the existing Mobility Partnerships with Moldova, Cape Verde, Georgia, Armenia, Morocco and Tunisia. The COM, EASO and Member States will continue to Identify new actions and initiatives aimed at strengthening third countries' capacities. Planning and programming of future financial instruments will begin following agreement on the MFF.
		C: Improving availability and access to means for self-reliance in third countries of first asylum, in order to avert secondary movements.	COM, MS	On-going.	See point I.3.B above on Moldova.
		D: Contributing to enhancing local employment opportunities in countries of origin.	COM, MS	On-going.	In the framework of the Mobility Partnership with Moldova, a number of projects were implemented aimed at capacity building for the National Employment Agencies. Through Mobility Partnership projects and notably Swedish participation, online and offline job fairs were organised with

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					big attendance.
4. Prevention of illegal immigration from the Southern Mediterranean countries.	To extend dialogues on migration, mobility and security with the Southern Mediterranean countries with a view to establishing Mobility Partnerships.	**A:** Implementing the European Council Conclusions of 23-24 June 2011 and of 2-3 March 2012 emphasising the need to establish and to expand a structured dialogue on migration, mobility and security with the southern Mediterranean countries. Cooperation should be founded on a performance - based approach and on appropriate conditions.	COM, MS HLWG	2012 and onwards	The Mobility Partnership with Tunisia was finalized on 3-3-2014. The first meeting for the implementation of the Mobility Partnership is expected to take place on 28 April 2014 in Tunis. See point I.4.C below on Jordan. An EU-Morocco Mobility Partnership was signed in the margins of the JHA Council on 7 June 2013. The first meeting for the implementation of the Mobility Partnership took place on 24-25 2013 September in Rabat .
		B: Conclude Mobility Partnership with Tunisia	COM,MS	2012 and onwards	The EU Tunisia Mobility Partnership was signed in the margins of the JHA Council on 3 March 2014.
		C: To consider launching Dialogues on migration, mobility and security leading towards Mobility Partnerships with Jordan and, once possible, with other Southern Mediterranean countries (with priority given to Egypt and	COM, MS, HLWG	2012 and onwards	Discussions on a Mobility Partnership with Jordan are at an advanced stage but agreement on the draft text has not been reached yet. The Egyptian administration has in the past thus far refused the EU invitation to start a Dialogue which was also complicated by the political turmoil in the country. Some signs of a possible change in positive direction can be observed but it remains to be seen whether they will materialise in the start of a Dialogue.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		Libya).			Due to recent developments regarding migration pressure from Libya on Southern Mediterranean borders, the need of urgently launching a dialogue with Libya has been repeatedly underlined by several Member States. <u>The current security situation however is not conducive to the start of a Dialogue in this stage</u>
		D: Building on existing cooperation, MS-third countries regional networks of cooperation in the Mediterranean should continue also within the framework of Eurosur.	MS, COM, FRONTEX	On-going.	The Seahorse Mediterranean Network is an EC-funded project involving all the EU <u>Mediterranean</u> Member States. The Seahorse network, which is being established within the framework of EUROSUR, was launched at a kick off conference held in Madrid on 19 September 2013. So far only the Libyan Coast Guard is officially participating in the project. Other North African countries could join in the future. <u>The second Steering Group meeting will take place in April 2014</u> .
					<u>In 2014 Frontex "Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community " (AFIC) is planning to hold 2 workshops and (tentatively) one annual conference with African partners and relevant EU actors, as well as 1 meeting with ILOs based in the region. A third joint annual AFIC report is also planned for early November.</u>
					Frontex recently invited selected third countries to take part in the EPN meeting, in order to become familiar with Frontex - coordinated joint maritime activities.
					Europol and Morocco are currently negotiating a <u>strategic</u> cooperation agreement through which they will be able to be more active in information sharing<u>(see doc.1703/13).</u>

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
5. Ensuring that the fight against illegal immigration is taken into account when developing dialogues with the Eastern partners (including the Eastern Partnership countries and non – EU Prague Process partners).	To enhance further the level of political and operational cooperation with the Eastern Partnership countries in the JHA areas. To ensure mobility in a secure and well managed environment.	**A**: Conclude agreements on Mobility Partnerships with relevant third countries.	COM, MS *(Poland)*	On-going.	Mobility Partnerships with Eastern Partnership countries, such as Moldova, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan have all been successfully launched. Mobility Partnership with Azerbaijan was signed in December 2013 and the first exchanges between the EU and Azerbaijan on future project took place at the beginning of 2014. In its GAMM implementation report from 2014,the Commission lists Belarus as a potential country with which a Mobility Partnership could be envisaged. The implementation process will constitute part of the first and second pillars of GAMM. Within the context of the Armenia Mobility Partnership, activities have been carried out within the Targeted Initiative for Armenia. These initiatives have focused on returns and the prevention of illegal immigration, and have involved several member States (BE, BG, CZ, DE, NL, PL, FR, RO). Kick-off workshops on the Legal Migration Pilot Project and the Migration and Development Pilot Project were first organised in the framework of the Prague Process in September 2012. Further joint workshops were held in February 2013. A workshop on the Migration and Development Project of the Prague Process Targeted Initiative was held on 9 October 2013 in Tbilisi, focusing on policies on circular migration. The first meeting of the Prague Process National Contact Points was held on 10-11 October 2013 in Tbilisi, focusing on fostering cooperation on labour migration among the Prague Process states.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		B: Further cooperation and coordination in the prevention of and the fight against illegal immigration, organised crime, trafficking in human beings, money laundering and terrorism.	COM, MS *(Poland)*	On-going.	Work has been taken forward in the framework of JAIEX WP on mapping cooperation and projects with the Eastern countries on illegal immigration in connection to: organised crime; THB; money laundering and other types of crime. Moreover, a questionnaire concluded by PL in January 2013, the results of which were presented in doc. 16532/1/12 REV 1, confirmed that the offence most strongly linked to illegal immigration is THB. Other activities include: o Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum (Moldova) on the topic of circular migration in October 2012. o Prague Process Kick-off Workshop for the Illegal Immigration Pilot Project Ukraine on 8-9 November 2012. o Workshop on the Illegal Immigration Pilot Project on 11-12 March 2013 in Warsaw, focusing on readmission and return. o Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum (Georgia) on the topic of readmission, return and reintegration on 20-21 March 2013. o Workshop on victims of THB on 21-22 May 2013 in Warsaw. o Study visit focusing on practical aspects of readmission and return in June 2013 within the Pilot Project on Illegal Immigration. o Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum (Czech Republic) on the topic of Integration of migrants and refugees; IDP issues in November 2013. o Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum (Hungary) on the topic of Statelessness in December 2013. o Expert workshop in the framework of the Eastern

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum on the topic of statelessness on 13 December 2013 in Budapest
					o Prague Process Final Conference of the Asylum Pilot Project (Germany) in March 2014.
					o Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum (Moldova) on the topic of Detention of migration in March 2014.
					o Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum (Lithuania) on the topic of Human smuggling.
					Cooperation has also been reinforced through the on-going visa liberalisation dialogue with Ukraine, and Moldova and, Georgia.
					Moldova is starting the negotiations for a cooperation agreement with Europol and Eurojust and Georgia is in the process of being included in the list of third countries with which Europol can conclude agreements.
					As regards trafficking in human beings, in December 2012 the Council adopted the second report on the implementation of the Action-Oriented Paper (AOP) on strengthening the EU external dimension on action against THB. The second report includes a list of priority countries and regions with which the EU will further strengthen cooperation and partnership.
					In addition, the EU Strategy towards the Eradication of Trafficking in Human Beings, 2012-2016, foresees increased cooperation with third countries of origin, transit and destination. Council conclusions were adopted which endorsed the Strategy. Furthermore, THB is systematically included in all migration and mobility dialogues conducted between the EU and its partners, both at regional and bilateral levels, as well as in all Mobility Partnerships concluded by the EU with third countries.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					Several study visits in the countries concerned are planned in 2014 in the context of the HU(Ministry of Interior) led project "Eastern Partnership cooperation in the fight against illegal migration-Supporting the implementation of the Prague Process Action Plan " . (EaP-SIPPAP) (started in April 2013) which contributes to strategic and operational cooperation in the EaP region in the area of prevention of cross-border crimes with special focus on illegal migration (further partners are: LV,SK,RO,PL and ICMPD).
		C: Convening meetings at ministerial level to ensure appropriate political guidance and coordination.	MS *(Poland)*	On-going.	Ministerial Meeting on Eastern Partnership in Justice and Home Affairs was held on 7-8th of October 2013 in the margins of JHA Council in Luxembourg.
6. Prevention of illegal immigration via the Western Balkans.	Intensify cooperation primarily with Serbia, to prevent and to fight increased illegal immigration pressure on the Hungarian - Serbian border. Enhance the EU's policy response to illegal migration in the region.	**A**: FRONTEX should make full use of its recently expanded mandate to step up assistance for border control activities at the Hungarian-Serbian border.	FRONTEX *(Hungary, Austria)*	On-going.	Frontex Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis provides analytical inputs to operational activities in the region. The RABIT Exercise was carried out on the Hungarian – Serbian and the Romanian-Serbian border in July and August 2013 in order to test the RABIT mechanism and to contribute to overall border control measures there. The exercise followed immediately the JO Neptune on time. The annual activity Joint Operation Focal Points Land on the Western Balkans Area 2013 has been extended until end of March 2014. The Joint Operation Focal Points 2014 is going to be impended this year from 1 April until 31 December (at designated Hungarian, Romanian, Bulgarian, Croatian and Greek Border crossing points with Western Balkan countries). Observers from Serbia , Bosnia and Herzegovina

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
	Continue assisting the relevant authorities of the Western-Balkan countries, in particular, Serbia, to strengthen their capacity to combat illegal immigration.				and Albania are foreseen to be deployed. Four months of Flexible Operational Activities are going to be implemented at Hungarian-Serbian, Croatian-Serbian and Romanian Serbian land border sections: May-June and September-October 2014. Observers from Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Albania are foreseen to be deployed. The Project Coordination Points 2014 is planned to be implemented at the Albanian-Montenegrin and Serbian-FYROM borders. Experts from EU member states are going to be deployed as observers to Albania, Murriqan and to FYROM ,Tabanovce.
		B: Implementation of the Action Plan with Serbia, to implement joint operations, law-enforcement training, legislative alignment, develop migration and asylum capacities and establish a Common Contact Point – making full use of IPA Projects.	MS, COM *(Hungary)*	On-going.	A number of relevant activities are under way, notably in the context of the multi-annual policy cycle and its Operational Action Plans led by Member States. The operational arrangement between Serbia and Europol has been signed January 2014. A project was launched by the Hungarian Office of Immigration and Nationality in 2013 aiming at capacity building of the Serbian country of origin (COI) unit and the Serbian migration and asylum system, which will be completed in 2014.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		C: Provide IPA assistance and continue monitoring of the further development of border, migration, asylum and visa systems in Western-Balkan countries.	COM, MS *(Hungary, Austria)*	On-going.	Such projects have been programmed for the Western Balkans, and the Commission is in the process of designing, for the next multi-annual financial perspective, new IPA projects focusing on the rule of law with a regional focus.
		D: Develop cooperation at all levels with Western Balkan countries in combating criminal organisations dealing with smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings.	MS, COM *(Slovenia, Austria)*	On-going.	A number of relevant activities are under way, notably in the context of the multi-annual policy cycle and its Operational Action Plans led by Member States. In May 2013, the current JIT THB project concluded with a final ministerial conference in Slovenia. The aim of the project was to enhance cooperation within the Southeast European law enforcement community and facilitate the use of JITs as an effective tool to fight trafficking in human beings. A new project on JITs was recently funded under ISEC. SI and BG are implementing a project entitled "Use of joint investigation teams for the needs of the fight against trafficking in human beings in the Western Balkans at the local level" (JIT THB WB). It entails thorough and comprehensive training programmes on the concept of JIT in the Western Balkan countries for representatives of prosecutors´ offices and police forces at the local level.
		E: Enhance inter-agency cooperation, notably between FRONTEX, EUROPOL and EASO in accordance with their mandates, to address cross border crimes related to illegal immigration and	FRONTEX, EUROPOL, EASO, COM *(Hungary)*	On-going.	Since EASO and FRONTEX signed a Working Arrangement on 2012 the two Agencies continued developing closer ties and strengthened their strategic and operational cooperation. Inter alia EASO and FRONTEX cooperate at the level of the management Board, within the JHA Agencies Network, in their respective analysis networks, in matters related to training and they implement joint operational RABIT and emergency support exercises.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		contribute to assisting asylum capacity in Western Balkan countries.			Trainings for Hellenic screening officers were carried out jointly by FRONTEX and EASO in 2013and are foreseen to continue in 2014.
					EASO and Frontex also cooperate on the implementation of the DEVCO funded project supporting awareness raising on Asylum, Reception and Border Management in relation to the ongoing dialogues with Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia.
					Europol Focal Point Checkpoint has launched Project FIMATHU which is aimed at countering the facilitation of illegal immigration into Austria and Hungary.
					Interagency cooperation is a part of each Operational Plan. Thus general and detailed roles and/or the contribution of the relevant Agencies (EUROPOL, EFCA, EMSA, etc) are foreseen in each particular JO before implementation of the activities. Furthermore, agencies are regularly invited to take part in the EPN meetings organized by Frontex in order to present an update on their activities. FRONTEX is stepping up its activities in view to concluding an operational Working Arrangement with Europol by the end of 2014.
		F: Support voluntary return to and reintegration programmes in Western Balkan countries, as appropriate and in a manner which avoids the risk of creating pull factors.	MS, COM,FRONTEX, IOM *(Hungary)*	On-going.	The 10th Annual DCAF (Democratic Control of Armed Forces) Ministerial Review Conference on Cooperation in the Field of Border Security in Southeast Europe, organized by DCAF and Croatia, taking place on 9 April 2014 will examine the possibility to arrange common joint return flights by WB countries.

Discussions on reintegration programs and sustainable return to Western Balkans will take place in the context of the EMN Return and Reintegration experts' Group (REG) before the |

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					end of this year. A practical Work Programme is being implemented and could be completed in connection with MARRI Project. "Support of cooperation among border police on airports in Southeast Europe . Frontex is developing cooperation in the Western Balkan airports by including them in EU joint operational activities. Frontex has established and will continue to activate Coordination Points at Western Balkan airport and at EU Focal Point airports having direct flight connections for exchanging border guards in coordinated operational activities. Frontex intends to test a new alerting system under an operational pilot project called Flight Tracking in the major Western Balkan airports by the end of 2014 and in the first months of 2015.With this task Frontex intends to validate the concept and start the full development of a system that will complement technology available(APIS) with the human factor provided by EU officers working at Third Country airports. After development the system developed to contribute to EUROSUR. Project Flight Tracking-Operational Pilot Project test: Preliminary meetings with Albanian ,Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia and Serbian authorities were positive.
7. Prevention of illegal immigration via the	Ensure that the illegal immigration pressure in this	**A:** Efforts to maintain and develop the current effective handling of the situation should	FRONTEX, MS *(Spain)*	On-going.	FRONTEX continues to support several Joint Operations in the Mediterranean and North Africa. This support includes continuous analysis and monitoring. Joint Operations EPN-Indalo and EPN-Minerva are located in the Western

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
Western Mediterranean and the African Atlantic coast.	area stays under control and does not develop negatively.	continue, in order to ensure that illegal immigration in this area stays under control and does not develop negatively.			Mediterranean, whereas Joint Operation EPN-Hera is located off the North African coast and maintains a deterrent effect on migration flows towards the Canary Islands.
					In addition, Frontex facilitates MS coordination in the EPN areas.
					Also, Frontex supports the national efforts of Southern Mediterranean countries, by facilitating initiatives such as EPN Common Patrols as a part of the EUROSUR.
					In addition, FRONTEX has also set up an intelligence network with relevant African countries(mostly Western African countries);the Africa FRONTEX Intelligence Community. The intelligence exchange that takes place through this network enriches FRONTEX analysis and contributes to the monitoring of the situation in participating African countries. This network produced an annual report in 2012, and the 2013 annual report is expected in November.
					<u>IOM s implementing a Program of Support of voluntary return and reintegration of irregular migrants who are in Morocco to their countries of origin. The program is receiving support from Member States of the EU (Belgium, Netherlands and Spain), as well as other countries. This project has been included in the Annex of the Mobility Partnership between Morocco and the EU and its Member States.</u>
		B: To start a "lessons learned" exercise on how the reduction of migration flows was achieved in the Western Mediterranean and the	MS, COM, FRONTEX (*Spain*)		Information was provided at SCIFA on 8-9 October 2012.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		African Atlantic Coast. In particular, to study whether similar efforts to prevent illegal immigration in origin and transit Countries could also be helpful to deal with migration flows coming from other Regions. Further implications. **C**: To make the most of the Rabat Process (Euro African Dialogue on Migration and Development) notably through the participation of EU Member States in the thematic workshops, especially the one on border management in Western Africa which took place on 5-6 November 2013 in Madrid.			Thematic Meeting on Border Management took place in Madrid on the 5th and 6th of November of 2013 under the presidency of Burkina-Faso and Spain. During the meeting it was suggested to develop pilot projects in different fields. The Summary of the discussions and conclusions of the Co-Chairs and other documents are available at http://processusderabat.net/web/index.php/support-projects-activities/border-management-meeting . The last Thematic Meeting took place in Paris on the 24th and 25th of April of 2014, under the presidency of France and the ECOWAS, and focused on "Migrants in a crisis context".

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
8. To address migratory pressures via the 'Silk Routes', including prevention of illegal immigration and combating THB		**A**: Efforts to develop the 'Silk Routes Partnership' should continue, including development of concrete projects to address illegal immigration, improve border management, enhance international protection, combat THB, and mitigate the negative impacts of migratory flows on EU MS and partner countries.	MS, COM	On-going.	The Budapest Process Multi-annual Strategy for 2014-2016 was adopted at its 21st Senior Officials meeting in Istanbul on 9-10 December 2013. The strategy comprises the anticipated activity under the new partnership, 'A Silk Routes Partnership for Migration', launched at the Budapest Process Ministerial Conference in April 2013. Following the establishment of the Silk Routes Partnership, the project 'Bridging Measures for Migration Management in the Silk Routes Region' was launched to prepare the ground for operational actions to strengthen migration management in the Silk Routes region, ahead of the commencement of EU funding in 2014. Scoping missions to Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan have taken place under the project, and migration training has been delivered to officials from all three countries. The outcomes and lessons learned from the project were discussed at a regional consultation meeting in Dubai on 24-25 March 2014 and will be taken into account during implementation of the new EU co-funded project 'Support to the Silk Routes Partnership for Migration under the Budapest Process' (the current budget is €3.76 million with €2.6 million of EU funding. The new project, which will be led by Hungary, was launched on 01 February 2014 and will run for three years. A kick-off conference will take place in Budapest on 2-3 June 2014. The overall objective of the project is to deliver concrete actions to strengthen the migration management capacities of the Silk Routes countries, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq, and in this way contribute to the implementation of the Istanbul Ministerial Declaration on A Silk Routes Partnership for Migration.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
9. Improving the functioning of ILO networks.		**A**: Follow-up on the amendment to the ILO Regulation on improved coordination and cooperation, particularly in terms of data sharing between ILO's posted in third countries.	MS, FRONTEX	On-going.	Deployed Member States ILO's should continue exchanging information. The responsible authorities of Member States and Frontex should be included in such information flows to support situational awareness and complement the situational picture where required.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
II. Strategic priority area: Enhanced border management at the external borders					
1. Strengthening political guidance and the legal framework regarding border control.	Strengthening of the political Schengen Governance. Conclude negotiations on proposals put forward by the Commission.	**A:** Mixed Committee to have regular political discussions on Schengen Governance at ministerial level.	COM, Council, EP	On-going.	The first discussion was held at the JHA Council in June 2012 and the second in December 2012 on the basis of COM report and PRES paper. The discussion was organised by the PRES in June 2013.
		B: Conclude negotiations on the proposals concerning the Schengen Borders Code and the Schengen Governance-package, EUROSUR, the Smart Borders Package and the Rules for sea operations coordinated by Frontex.	EP, MIXED COM, PRES	Schengen: possibly 2013 EUROSUR Smart Borders Package: possibly 2015.	The Schengen Governance package was adopted on 7th October 2013. The technical amendment to the Schengen Borders Code entered into force on 19 July 2013. EUROSUR has become operational from 2nd December 2013. The "Smart borders Package" was adopted by the Commission on 28 February 2013. The first examination of the proposals for the Entry Exit System and Registered Traveller Program in the Council is completed. In order to address certain concerns expressed by the co-legislators during negotiations, the Commission has initiated a proof of concept exercise which consists of a Commission-led study (as of February 2014) and a subsequent pilot project envisaged to be carried out by eu-LISA in 2015.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
				Frontex sea operations: 2014	Discussions in Council and European Parliament on the proposal to establish rules for sea operations coordinated by FRONTEX have been finalised in February 2014.The draft regulation was adopted by the EP on the 16 of April. Adoption by the Council is foreseen to take place early May and the signature is foreseen to take place mid-May.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
2. Preventing and combating illegal immigration by ensuring strong and efficient external border control.	Strengthening the security and control at the Schengen external borders. Implementation of the FRONTEX regulation. Enhance inter-agency cooperation and cooperation between agencies and Member States. Strengthening identification of illegal immigration routes inside the Schengen area.	**A:** COM to present regular reports to the European Parliament and to the Council on the functioning of the Schengen area.	COM	May 2012.	The <u>fourth</u> bi-annual report was presented at the JHA Council in <u>November</u> 2013. The next bi-annual report is due by the end of <u>June 2014</u>.
		B: FRONTEX to offer the coordination and organisation of joint operations, improve cooperation with other agencies and competent border control authorities of Member States and implement the new FRONTEX regulation.	FRONTEX	On-going. <u>Implementation of Pulsar concept</u>	<u>Frontex continues to implement its Programme of Work ,as endorsed by its Management Board.</u> <u>At third Country airports Frontex is carrying out the following operational activities: Joint operation Pegasus to tackle treats affecting the external air borders of EU and joint operation Alexis to respond to the perceived vulnerabilities/needs of EU airports.</u> <u>Interagency cooperation with Europol and Interpol is planned.</u> Inter-agency cooperation initially established in the context of joint maritime operation EPN-Indalo has been extended to all maritime operations in line with the EUROSUR Regulation. The European Patrols Network (EPN) meetings provided a forum for practitioners to openly discuss questions related to the maritime domain and to look for possible common solutions. The EPN involves partner authorities from Member States, EU institutions and agencies (Europol, EMSA, EFCA, JRC, ESA and FRA), international associations (UNDOC, Interpol), other entities (CeCLAD), and third country partner organizations, such as US Coast Guard, Australian Department of Immigration and Citizenship and Canadian Border Services Agency.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
	Member States making full use of passenger data in accordance with directive 2004/82/EC.	**C:** Member States should, where relevant, make use of passenger data for improving border controls and combating illegal immigration in accordance with the requirements in Directive 2004/82/EC.	MS	On-going.	FRONTEX has actively supported MSs in rolling out their API systems, and developed a first version of best practice guidelines for the harmonization and use of API in border control. The Agency is leading an initiative to develop a passenger intelligence model that MSs could use to screen persons of interest who deserve special attention while complying with applicable regulations. This could achieve more effective and efficient border control while improving passenger experience. The Passenger Intelligence Model will be available in early 2014 and properly disseminated and explained to MS.
		D: An external evaluation of Directive 2004/82 (Advanced Passenger Information) was carried out in 2012. Results were shared with Member States.	COM	2012 and onwards	The external evaluation has been completed and results were shared with Members States in September 2012, and were also published on COM website. The COM also presented the results of the study in the Frontiers Working Party in April 2013.
		E: Develop cooperation at the appropriate levels with countries of origin and transit, on combating illegal immigration and criminal organisations dealing with smuggling of migrants and	MS, FRONTEX, EUROPOL	on-going	Cooperation with key third countries was on-going throughout the period, including: ▪ A meeting of Focal Point Checkpoint was organised in November 2012 to discuss new trends and best practices. ▪ FRONTEX reported that the implementation of relevant working arrangements with third countries (e.g. Nigeria) did receive attention during the period, but that limited human and financial resources, hindered attention to this on a larger scale.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		trafficking in human beings.			▪ <u>Frontex developed a set of indicators for regular monitoring of intra-Schengen flows. The results of the pilot information exchange are included in the Intra-EU/Schengen Secondary Movements 2013 Tailored Risk Analysis which was distributed to the Commission and Member States in December 2013.</u> ▪ <u>Frontex contributes to the bi-annual report on the functioning of the Schengen Area. An update of the TRA on secondary movements is planned in fall 2014 ,also contributing to the development of the joint assessment with Europol on secondary movements</u>. ▪ FRONTEX Executive Director visited Turkey in May 2013. ▪ <u>A project regarding capacity building, trainings e.t.c. on issues related to illegal migration, border management and returns will be launched within 2014, by Greece-Bulgaria-Turkey.</u>
		F: Improve co-operation through exchange of information and best practices in order to identify and curb illegal immigration routes inside the Schengen Area, including air routes.	MS, COM	End 2013 and onwards	The first expert meeting on intraSchengen flows was held in October 2012 and a second meeting took place in April 2013. Follow up meetings are foreseen still for 2013. The first results of the pilot project are expected by the end of 2013. As of the end of 2012, Frontex provided technical support to the COM regarding setting up an information exchange on secondary movements. In 2013, MS input was required. Discussions took place in three Risk Analysis tactical meetings on availability of data, proposal for new/extended indicators, and request for information on a tailored risk analysis on secondary

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					movements. Since September 2013, Greece implements the Operation "SARISA", for combating secondary movements of immigrants trying to move illegally to central Europe via Albania and FYROM. In order to ensure an added value to this effort, all evaluations and analysis provided by FRONTEX and EUROPOL are taken into account.
		G: Improving the situational picture of migration pressures, by taking into account modi operandi used for secondary movements within the EU.	MS, FRONTEX	On-going.	Within the EDF risk analysis network now covers secondary movements across air and sea borders In this framework, Greece produces Risk Analysis products on a regular basis.
		H: Enhance inter-agency cooperation, notably between FRONTEX, EASO and EUROPOL. Cooperation between EUROPOL and FRONTEX should also concern serious crimes at the external borders.	FRONTEX, EUROPOL, EASO	On-going.	FRONTEX continues to develop its risk analysis on cross-border crime, including inputs from Europol. With EASO, mutual exchange of information takes place analytical networks FRONTEX contributed to the SOCTA ,while Europol and EASO provided input to the FRONTEX Annual Risk Analysis**.** EASO and Frontex work closely to further develop operational cooperation in their respective operations. Several meetings have taken place and a working group is drafting common guidelines. EUROPOL is invited to take part in all joint maritime operations and the EPN meetings.

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Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					EUROPOL participates in the development of FRONTEX training tools for combating vehicle crime. EASO and Frontex will implement a joint project aimed at promoting the participation of Morocco and Tunisia in the activities of these two Agencies. Frontex aims at liaising with border guard authorities of Morocco and Tunisia .

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
III. Strategic priority area: Preventing illegal immigration from Turkey					
1. Ensuring effective border controls are in place at the Greek-Turkish border.	To fight illegal border crossings by ensuring that efficient measures are in place for the detection, prevention and interception of illegal migrants at the Greek-Turkish border. Increase capacity in Greece by introducing sustainable measures to reduce illegal immigration.	**A:** Swift conclusion of negotiations of a working arrangement between FRONTEX <u>and</u> the competent Turkish border control authorities.	FRONTEX *(Denmark, France, Greece)*	2013	A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between FRONTEX and Turkey establishing practical cooperation between FRONTEX and Turkish border authorities (risk analysis, training, research, exchange of experience and best practices) in May 2012. <u>In March 2014 FRONTEX agreed with the Turkish authorities on a cooperation agenda to implement a series of activities foreseen within the framework of their Memorandum of Understanding</u>**.** <u>In the framework of confidence building measures, tactical meetings are organized, by the exchange of visits, between the Commandants of the Hellenic and the Turkish Coast Guard, aiming to the reinforcement of cooperation, inter alia to the management of seaborne illegal migratory flows. The last meeting took place in Ankara and Istanbul in the period 19-22 November 2013.</u> <u>During the 9th experts meeting, according to the article 13 of the Greek – Turkish Readmission Protocol, held in Athens on 25-26 July 2013, aiming to the reinforcement of the bilateral cooperation on issues of readmission and seaborne illegal migration confrontation, the Greek side proposed to the Turkish counterparts to expand the already implemented and fruitful cooperation in Evros region, between the Greek and Turkish Authorities involved in Greek-Turkish land borders, to the eastern Aegean sea islands and opposite coastal areas of Turkey.</u>

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Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					The expansion of this cooperation was actually triggered by the Common Declaration signed in Istanbul, on 4-5 March 2013 by the Greek Minister of Public Order & Citizen's Protection and the Turkish Minister of Interior. The aim of such cooperation is to organize monthly and trimester or semester meetings between designated contact points of all Greek and Turkish competent authorities to exchange operational information and deal effectively with the illegal border crossing attempts by sea on a daily basis. The Turkish side has not replied officially yet but, initially, there was a positive reaction to this proposal.
		B: Fully implement the findings of the 2005 and 2010 Schengen evaluation reports.	Greece *(Denmark, France)*	2005 findings to be implemented before end of 2012. 2010 findings on-going.	See below
		C: Intensify monitoring of the National Action Plan "Greece – Schengen".	Council *(Denmark, France)*	On-going.	On 7/8 October 2013, a state of play concerning the Greek National Action Plan was submitted to the JHA Council. A report on the findings of the peer-to-peer visit has been presented and adopted at the SCHEVAL WG. Council Conclusions for the Schengen evaluation of Greece have been approved by silent procedure (ended 4.4.2014). The text will be forwarded to COREPER as an I/A point and then to the June JHA Council for adoption . It must be highlighted that the National Action Plan "Greece-Schengen" was launched in 2010 with a duration of three

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					(3) years and was finalised in December 2013. During these three years, a great improvement was noticed by the Evaluation Committees, as described in eight progress reports presented by Greece as well as in the reports from three peer to peer visits which took place in March 2011, May 2012 and October 2013.
		D: Continue support for Operations Poseidon Sea and Attica through increased contributions from Member States.	FRONTEX, MS *(Denmark, France)*	2012 and onward	Due to a shift on migratory flows from the Greek-Turkish land border to the maritime borders, and the impact of the Syrian crisis, Joint Operation Poseidon Sea 2013's operational area has been reinforced and its activities continued from January until the end of April 2014 Poseidon Sea 2014 is going to be launched as of 1st May. Due to the large number of migrants approaching the Greek Aegean islands, a new First Reception Centre was opened on Lesvos Island.

The Member States involvement at the Greek-Turkish land border has been scaled down as a result of national measures. At the same time, the Bulgarian – Turkish land border has been affected and operational activities in Bulgaria reinforced as of July 2013, focused primarily on deployment of second line experts, such as debriefing experts and interpreters. Joint Operation Poseidon Land 2014 was launched as of 27.3.2014. As of March 2013, the project Attica started permanent deployments of screening experts and interpreters and continued deployments in Samos and Lesvos. The project Attica 2013 lasted until 27.03.2014. The J.O. Attica 2014 was launched as of 31.3.2014.

As of August 2012 and continuing, seaborne migratory flows transiting from Turkey to Greece destined to other |

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					EU Member States/Schengen Associated Countries have increased significantly.
					With regard to the Search and Rescue operations at the Greek – Turkish sea borders, the cooperation between the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (JRCC) Piraeus and the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) Ankara is continuous and effective.
					The proximity of the west Turkish coast to the Eastern Aegean Sea islands is the main element making the illegal border crossing attempts convenient. Additionally it is highlighted that, in 2013, incidents have occurred at the widest dispersion of the eastern Aegean front (from Alexandroupolis to Megisti Island), stretching over a distance of more than 800 nautical miles, measuring it by a direct line.
					Therefore, it is crucial that the Turkish authorities intensify their patrols along the western coastline and territorial waters opposite to the Eastern Aegean Sea islands, in order to timely detect the transportations of migrants to the coast by facilitators, as well as to prevent the departures of migrant boats towards the Greek territory.
					Furthermore, the operational suitability of assets deployed by EU MS/SAC to JO Poseidon Sea is of utmost importance to increase the surveillance of Greek – Turkish maritime borders enhancing the reaction capability and saving lives of third country nationals in danger at sea.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					The Turkish Authorities are encouraged to exchange operational information with the HCG via the already established international police cooperation channels or other available channels, on routes, modus operandi vessels – boats used as well as arrested or wanted facilitators – traffickers would also assist in the dismantling of criminal organized networks involved, discouraging other networks to be involved and, eventually, constituting Turkey and Greece as "less attractive" transit countries for illegal border crossings.
					FRONTEX continues to support the deployment of interpreters and de-briefers from Member States under the Poseidon Regional Programme. The capacity of the host MS to carry out debriefing activities was enhanced by the Agency organizing workshops and trainings sessions involving Greek and Bulgarian officers. The International Coordination Centre under JO Poseidon Land has operated in Sofia since 6 November ,2013 due to displacement of the migratory pressures.
		E: Swift implementation of the Greek Asylum and Migration Management, focusing on increased operational capacity at the border, notably by optimising synergies between the different actors involved, including the Task Force on	Greece, COM, MS, EASO *(Denmark, France)*	On-going.	The work on the implementation of the Asylum and Migration Action Plan is on-going and it's being monitored by the Council. The exercise has been taken forward in the framework of regular meetings with Greek authorities and in cooperation with interested Member States and other stakeholders. The last meeting of interested MS took place on 27 September 2013. The last meeting of the interested MS and other stakeholders took place on 10 April 2014.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		Greece.			
2. Combating illegal immigration transiting Turkey to enter the EU.	To obtain the effective engagement of the Turkish authorities to prevent illegal immigration transiting through their territory towards the EU external borders. To sign and conclude the EU-Turkey readmission agreement. Intensify trilateral cooperation between Greece, Bulgaria and	**A:** Enhancing capacity to generate situational awareness on illegal migration via Turkey.	FRONTEX	On-going.	As regards exchange of information, Turkish border authorities attended a workshop on information exchange with Frontex and agreed with its principles. The first instance of planned regular exchange of information took place in August 2013. For the EU-Turkey readmission agreement see section I.1 above

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
	Turkey for joint border management and police cooperation.				
		B: Continue assisting the Turkish authorities in strengthening their capacity to combat illegal immigration, through IPA and bilateral MSs' funding.	COM, MS *(Denmark, France)*	On-going.	COM has been continuing to co-finance new IPA projects, contributing directly and indirectly to combating illegal migration in Turkey, and more generally to improving the management of migration. These (with the amounts allocated) include the following: ▪ IPA 2011 Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking €1.7m ▪ IPA 2011 Socioeconomic development through demining and increasing the Border Surveillance Capacity at the Eastern Borders of Turkey €3.6m ▪ IPA 2011 Strengthening the National Asylum Decision-Making Procedures €1m ▪ IPA 2011 Development of Protection Strategies for Persons in Need of International Protection in the Urban Context €2.4m ▪ IPA 2011 Assisted voluntary return and reintegration of illegal migrants in Turkey through strengthening and developing a coherent national AVRR mechanism €1.7m ▪ IPA 2012 Socioeconomic development through demining and increasing the Border Surveillance Capacity at the Eastern Borders of Turkey - Phase II € 4m Additional projects are also under preparation.
		C: Continue promoting the reform	COM *(Denmark,*	On-going.	In April 2013, the Turkish Parliament adopted a new Law on International Protection and Foreigners which

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		of border, migration, asylum and visa systems in Turkey	*France)*		completely modifies and reforms the management of asylum and migration in Turkey bye approximating it to the EU's system. IPA assistance and dialogue with the COM contributed to the preparation of this law and new IPA projects in the pipeline will its help with implementation. The dialogue on visa liberalization with Turkey was initiated in parallel with the signature of the EU - Turkey readmission agreement on 16 December 2013. Swift ratification with Turkey of the readmission agreement is expected. Within the framework of the visa dialogue field visits are foreseen and technical discussions aimed at analysis the weaknesses of Turkish legislation and administration in addressing illegal migration, and at identifying reforms and measures to be taken to improve the situation on the basis of the Roadmap improved by Council. Those visits and discussions will take place between 1 and 15 April 2014.The Commission will report on this matter in Summer 2014. FI has undertaken a twinning project on the development of risk analysis systems by Turkish border control authorities
		D: Develop cooperation at the appropriate levels in order to combat organised crime facilitating the smuggling of	MS, FRONTEX, EUROPOL *(Denmark, France)*	On-going.	COSI is in the process of monitoring the implementation of the operational action plans of the EU policy cycle for organised and serious international crime. At JHA Council on 6-7 June 2013, it was agreed that there should be nine priorities for the policy cycle 2014-2017 (illegal immigration, THB, cybercrime, MTIC and excise fraud, firearms, property crime, counterfeit goods,

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		migrants and the trafficking of human beings.			cocaine/heroine and synthetic drugs).
					On 17 September 2013, COSI met and approved the policy cycle Multi Annual Strategic Goals (MASPs) .
					In addition, Member States are continuing to develop and support contacts with non-EU countries. For example, Turkey participated in two international operations supported by Checkpoint in 2013. All information exchanges from Turkey were carried out through DE, because Turkey is not a member of Checkpoint.
					FRONTEX continues to develop and implement activities which contribute to the prevention and combating of cross border crime by supporting national authorities in cases of smuggling and trafficking in human beings. This includes the identification of facilitators and potential victims. In this regard, FRONTEX has been invited to take part in the regional ILOs meetings in Turkey since 2012. These meetings contribute to the updating of the situational picture of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings in Turkey, and FRONTEX remains willing to participate in future meetings.
		E: Continue and step up the dialogue with Turkey launched on 15 March 2012, on cooperation within the JHA area.	COM *(Denmark, France)*	On-going.	In November 2012, the Roadmap towards visa-free regime with Turkey and the non-paper regarding dialogue and cooperation on JHA matters with Turkey were agreed. They were communicated to Turkish authorities in December 2012 and officially handed over in parallel with the signature of the readmission agreement.
					Several meetings have already taken place since

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Respons ible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					December 2012, at various levels, between COM and Turkish authorities to explain the contents of the Roadmap and describe how the dialogue on visa liberalization should function. On December 2013 the visa liberalization dialogue started.It will primarily consists in technical discussions and field visits, aimed at collecting information allowing the Commission to assess how Turkey fulfils the requirements set in the 4 blocks of the "Roadmap towards visa-free regime with Turkey.
		F: Develop cooperation between EUROPOL and Turkish Police.	EUROPOL *(Denmark, France)*	On-going.	A follow-up meeting took place in April 2012 with DG HOME to discuss the enhancement of cooperation between the parties and, in particular, the issue of hosting a Turkish Liaison Officer at Europol. During 2012, Europol and the Turkish Police established a secure line and a SIENA connection. However, operational information cannot yet be exchanged in the absence of an operational agreement. A joint workshop between Europol and Turkish law enforcement authorities was held in January 2013, to discuss possible ways of reaching such an operational agreement. The workshop covered issues such as data protection and confidentiality.
		G: FRONTEX should make full use of its recently expanded mandate and strengthen its operational cooperation with the	FRONTEX *(Denmark, France)*	On-going	FRONTEX has engaged in a number of relevant activities, including a 3-day training workshop for Turkish border control authorities (including practical issues regarding information exchange and statistical data exchange). A review of the initial data exchange had to be postponed due to EU-Turkey policy developments. Once

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		competent Turkish border control authorities.			a definition of joint cooperative activities can be agreed between Turkey and FRONTEX, the activity will be re-launched possibly in May 2013. FRONTEX also undertook a number of actions to strengthen risk analysis cooperation with Turkey. In particular, FRONTEX managed and implemented a risk analysis workshop with all relevant border control authorities in Turkey (armed forces, national police, gendarmerie, coast guards and customs). A Turkish delegation also participated in a follow-up workshop on practical information exchange held in Warsaw. Discussions are well advanced for the establishment of a risk analysis network with Turkey, including an information exchange platform with a number of strategic indicators, to facilitate joint analytical work. The first instance of planned regular exchange of information took place in August 2013.
		H. Establishment of a trilateral common contact centre for cooperation between police, border and customs officials from the Republic of Bulgaria, The Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey, in coordination with FRONTEX and EUROPOL within their respective mandates.	Bulgaria, Greece, Turkey *(Denmark, France, Bulgaria)*	On-going.	A proposal has been put forward by BG, with the support of EL, for a roadmap project on active information exchange. A trilateral meeting took place between EL, BG and Turkey in Sofia in February 2013. The meeting focused on cooperation in the framework of joint contact point centres. During the meeting, the legal framework for the actions of the future trilateral common contact centre was presented and a Draft Agreement on the Implementation of its establishment was proposed by the EL-BG side to be further discussed. IPA is ready to co-finance a project aimed at supporting the participation of Turkey in a cross-border cooperation project involving Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria. EBF funds should be mobilised to facilitate the participation

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					of the two Member States in this project.
					On 12 September 2013 consultations between representatives of Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey on the draft agreement for the establishment of the common contact centre for police and customs cooperation at border checkpoint "Kapitan Andreevo" were held in Sofia.
					The text was negotiated at expert level. Signing of the agreement should take place following the conclusions of the national coordination procedure.
					On 20 September 2013 a meeting between Bulgarian and Turkish Ministers of the Interior was held in Ankara. The ministers agreed to accelerate the national consultation procedures for signing the agreement.
					<u>There is mutual consent between the Republic of Bulgaria, the Hellenic Republic and the Republic of Turkey on the text of the Draft Agreement on establishing the trilateral common contact centre. All national internal procedures are finalized. A new meeting between the ministers of the three countries is forthcoming in the near future.</u>
		I: Enhance cooperation with the relevant Turkish authorities, in order to ensure the implementation of escorted transit and assisted voluntary	MS, COM *(Denmark, France)*	On-going.	Council Conclusions on cooperation with Turkey were adopted in June 2012. Following up on these Conclusions in December 2012, the COM handed over to Turkey the document proposing the Broader Dialogue and Cooperation Framework on JHA with Turkey, in which it also proposed developing cooperation on joint return flights.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		return projects via Turkey.			

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
IV.		**Strategic priority area: Better tackling of abuse of legal migration channels**			
1. Prevent an increase in unfounded asylum applications as a direct consequence of introducing a visa free regime for a third country and decrease the number of over-stayers in the Schengen-area.	Decrease the number of unfounded asylum applications from visa free third countries.	**A:** Assess the expected impact on migration and risks to the EU's internal security before launching a visa liberalisation dialogue with third countries.	COM, FRONTEX, EASO, EUROPOL,MS	Continuous.	In response to a request by the Commission, FRONTEX prepared a tailored risk analysis on the potential impact of visa liberalisation for the citizens of Ukraine and Moldova in January 2012. An update was prepared in July 2013. EASO has published a report containing a comparative analysis of asylum flows from Western Balkans candidate countries. The report discusses current and future push/pull factors in the region. The report can be retrieved at: http://easo.europa.eu/wp-content/uploads/BZ0213708ENC.pdf EASO has published a comparative analysis of push and pull factors influencing the decision of Western Balkans citizens to apply for asylum in EU countries and the most effective measures taken by MS to deal with this flow. EASO will also make an assessment of the possible risk of unfounded use of the asylum system by citizens of Peru and Colombia in the context of visa liberalisation. Europol has limited information on Organised Crime Groups involved in unfounded asylum applications. Checkpoint does not currently support any operations on this issue.
		B: Assess the functioning of existing readmission agreements with potential visa	COM, MS, Switzerland	Continuous.	No further actions are intended by CH concerning Visa liberalization dialogues (CH is not party to European readmission agreements).

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		liberated countries before launching a visa liberalisation dialogue.			
		C: Continued monitoring of the effects of current visa free regimes with the assistance of FRONTEX and EASO, in accordance with their mandates and in close cooperation with the third countries in question.	COM, MS, FRONTEX, EASO *(Belgium)*	Continuous.	A Post-Visa Liberalisation Monitoring Mechanism (PVLMM) for the Western Balkan Countries, in accordance with the Commission Statement of 8 November 2010, is already in place.

FRONTEX continues to support the PVLMM and provides monthly updates to the Commission. This report is an essential instrument for discussions with Member States on monitoring the implementation of the visa free regime. EASO also inputs to this mechanism in regard to asylum.

BE consulted Member States by means of a questionnaire in November 2012 and reported on the responses of Member States in March 2013 (doc 7812/13).
EASO has published a comparative analysis of the flow of Western Balkans asylum seekers, who represent the largest flow of unfounded applications in the EU. In addition a Practical Cooperation meeting on this subject was held at EASO in March 2013. |
| | | **D:** Improved information campaigns on the rights and obligations that follow a decision on visa free travel | MS, COM | On-going. | |

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		in the third countries.			
2. Combating and preventing illegal immigration caused by visa liberalisation.	Decrease the level of illegally staying work-force.	**A:** Adoption of the Commission proposal to amend Visa Regulation 539/2001 and establishing a suspension mechanism allowing for the rapid, temporary suspension of the visa waiver for a third country in the event of a sudden and considerable abuse of asylum procedures or increase in the number of illegal migrants.	Council and EP	Third quarter 2013	<u>Regulation (EU) No 1289/2013 of the European Parliament and the Council of 11 December 2013 amending Council Regulation (EC).No 539/2001 listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement was adopted and entered into force on 9 January 2014</u> **.**
		B: Make use of accelerated procedures and swift returns in full respect of EU and international standards as regards manifestly unfounded claims in case of abuse of	MS *(Slovenia)*	On-going.	SI conducted a questionnaire in order to analyse the state of play. The results were presented during the informal January 2013 SCIFA and a final report was presented in doc. 9596/13.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		visa liberalisation.			
		C: Gradual steps towards visa liberalisation with selected third countries while fully involving the Council on a case by case basis.	COM and Council	Continuous.	Visa dialogue is on-going with Turkey. The relevant dialogue with Russia is currently suspended. Visa liberalisation Action Plans on-going with Kosovo, Georgia and Ukraine.
		D. Ensuring that visa liberalisation processes are based on progress in the third countries concerned. Council must be involved in the different steps. Visa liberalization should not be granted automatically. **PRES GSC**	COM and Council	Continuous.	

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
V. Strategic priority area: Safeguarding and protecting free movement by prevention of abuse by third country nationals					
1. To improve understanding of abuse of free movement rights by third country nationals and organised crime aiming at facilitating illegal immigration.	To gather, analyse and share data on fraud and abuse at the EU level. To agree on a common methodology for gathering data, based on consultation of the EMN study on "Misuse of the Right to Family Reunification: Marriages of Convenience and False Declarations of Parenthood". To improve dissemination of information,	**A:** Improve understanding of the possible abuse of family reunification rights experienced by Member States in light of the EMN study on "*Misuse of the Right to Family Reunification: marriages of convenience and false declarations of parenthood*".	PRES, COM, MS *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*		Following up on findings of EMN study and EUROPOL actions under Activity B, Member States are expected to begin further work towards agreeing on a common methodology for gathering data on the phenomenon. Twenty six Member States have now uploaded their national EMN study reports on misuse of family reunification rights onto the EMN website. <u>The Commission has adopted on 3 April 2014 guidelines (COM(2014) 210 final) for the application of the Directive on the right to family reunification (Directive 2003/86/EC).</u>
		B: Consider whether and to what extent EUROPOL, in line with its mandate and within the scope of EU crime priorities, could gather and analyse data on the facilitation of sham marriages and EU documentation fraud by organised criminal groups.	PRES, COM, EUROPOL FRONTEX *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*	2013	There has been an initial discussion conducted with Europol on data gathering and data analysis with regard to organised sham marriages and documentation fraud, in order to identify the sort of information/data and the level of its usefulness. In particular, AT and UK have been liaising with Senior Specialists of the EUROPOL Organised Crime Network Division to discuss further work which may be necessary. On document fraud, FRONTEX established and manages the European Union Document Fraud Risk Analysis network (EDF RAN), in which Europol also takes part. Analytical products from this network are distributed to Member States and Europol, with the

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
	intelligence and best practices between Member States to deter and investigate abuse of free movement rights. To improve information sharing within Member States (between the different authorities involved in registering marriages, social and legal protection of children, deciding on applications for residence, awarding social				EDF Annual Risk Analysis as the flagship analytical product of this intelligence community. Europol also gave a presentation on this topic at SCIFA in April 2013. The presentation included examples of recent cases of forged documentation and sham marriages, both of which substantiated links to organised crime. EUROPOL has completed a report on marriages of convenience which has been submitted to the COM. The report provided examples and recommendations for more accurate assessment of this increasing threat. In addition, EUROPOL agreed to share the publicly available elements with Member States. Europol Checkpoint Target Group SNOW is dedicated to exchanging and analysing information on Organised Crime Groups facilitating sham marriages. In 2012, Checkpoint provided analytical and operational support to several Joint Investigations by NL-UK (FRY/GELDERMALSEN) and by FR-PT-UK (JUSTES NOCES). During the annual Checkpoint conference in November 2012, a special workshop was dedicated to sham marriages, with a view to identifying best practices and providing an overview of the situation in the EU. See activity 1.C below
		C: Improve the gathering and analysis of data on EU documentation	MS, COM, FRONTEX *(Germany, the Netherlands,*	Continuous.	Following the setting up of the European Document Fraud Risk Analysis Network (EDF-RAN), more data has been gathered on document fraud resulting in improved analysis. Analytical findings from this

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
	benefits and job centres). To identify and direct the action required to tackle abuse.	fraud and detected facilitators, for the purposes of strategic priority V.	*UK, Austria)*		network are incorporated into more general FRONTEX analyses like the FRAN Quarterlies and the Annual Risk Analysis. Europol Checkpoint Target Group RAIN is specifically dedicated to exchange and analysis of information related to large-scale travel document production. RAIN supports several on-going investigations focusing on print shops in EU Member States. The process of identification of any possible gaps or areas where further work might be needed is continuous. In this regard, the following recent activities occurred: ▪ A thematic discussion on document fraud was held in SCIFA in April 2013 with the participation of FRONTEX, EUROPOL and Member States. See doc. 7994/13. ▪ A paper setting out current work on documentation fraud, and identifying gaps in knowledge, was recently presented by AT. Contributions to the paper were also made by NL, AT, DE and UK; these were used to inform the thematic discussion at SCIFA. ▪ FRONTEX Annual Risk Analysis 2013 on Document Fraud was released in May 2013. ▪ FRONTEX has invited MS to contribute to a feasibility study in 2013 on extending the scope of the EDF data exchange. The results will be presented in the EDF network meeting in October. ▪ <u>Greece participates on the efforts of EUROPOL in combating illegal migration and the use of fraud credit cards as well as fraud travel documents. Operation AERODROMOS (focused at the airports</u>

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					of Athens and Thessaloniki) will take place in 8/9-04-2014 where Greece is the "Driver" of the operation. ▪ Frontex Annual Risk Analysis 2014 on Document Fraud is planned to be released in June 2014. ▪ The options on the way forward resulting from the feasibility study on extending the scope of the EDF data exchange were presented to the EDF network in October 2013, and have been put on hold for future consideration.
		D: Identify desired EU actions to tackle abuse and continue to support existing work to tackle trafficking of human beings and organised crime aiming at facilitating illegal immigration.	COM, MS *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*	On-going.	During the thematic discussion at SCIFA in April 2013 it was also agreed by Member States that there should be greater co-operation and collaboration between Frontex and Europol on this issue.
		E: Make effective use of Joint Investigation Teams (JITs) to investigate sham marriages and EU document fraud.	PRES, COM *(Germany, the Netherlands, (UK, Austria)*	On-going.	UK and NL have jointly presented to FREEMO periodic updates relating to Operation Fry. Theses updates have explained the benefits of collaborative work, and of sharing the results of the operation. Proposed methods for consideration by all responsible parties: 1) MS to highlight relevant Joint Investigation Teams operating on their territory.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					2) Consider conferences/seminars to share information and best practices. 3) Conducting an investigation into the possibility of funding Joint Investigation Teams.
		F: Further develop the existing work of national contact points established in the context of the FREEMO expert group and prepare a handbook on marriages of convenience, including indicative criteria to assist in the identification of sham marriages.	MS, COM *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*	On-going.	Criteria and best practices related to detection of marriages of convenience (following Council Resolution 97/C 382/01 of 4 December 1997) are being explored. Work is finalised on a draft handbook on addressing marriages of convenience (prepared by the Commission together with the Member States in the framework of the FREEMO expert group is expected to be issued in spring 2014) on addressing marriages of convenience. The Handbook is supposed to provide practical support for the operational authorities and clarity on the EU legal framework within which national authorities can operate in the fight against abuse related to free movement of EU citizens and their families.
		G: Consider making use of a EUROPOL Platform for Experts as a forum to share best practice and experience.	MS *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*	On-going.	Initial discussions have been held with Europol on the establishment of an EPE.
		H: Make full use of the national contact points established in the	MS *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*	Continuous.	The list of national (both operational and policy) contact points within FREEMO is being continuously updated and is readily accessible on CIRCA.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		context of the FREEMO expert group for queries in individual cases.			Discussions have been initiated with operational personnel about the desirability and feasibility of establishing an additional EU-wide network of operational contacts for queries in individual cases related to abuses by third-country nationals, and for sharing intelligence. These discussions should take into account the need to avoid duplication.
2. To prevent the fraudulent acquisition and use of free movement rights by third country nationals.	To ensure that travel documents used within the EU, including their issuance and validation, meet minimum security standards, with a particular focus on ID and residence cards.	**A:** Implement enhanced security standards for EU documentation for legal stay (residence cards etc.), together with secure issuing processes, on the basis of improved source documents (residence cards etc.) including the ability to take biometrics for third country nationals, and work towards common validation standards at borders and domestic controls.	MS, COM, Article 6 Committee *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*	On-going.	Discussions have been initiated within the Article 6 Committee on technical specifications for documents. Some initiatives relating to actions A & B are featured in the False Documents Working Group's work programmes.\n\nProposed methods for consideration by all responsible parties:\n1) Considering the link between abuse of free movement rights by TCNs and the abuse of source (breeder) documents issued within and outside the EU.\n2) Continuing work in the think-tank on source documents (established by WP on False Documents) to produce a report to the COM containing recommendations for possible minimum security standards for source documents.\n\nFollowing on from the methods set out above the following developments were reported during the period:\n\n▪ The Single Points of Contact (SPOC) to enable the exchange of certificates between Member States, in order to access fingerprints on chips in documents from the issuing country has been established with Commission decision C(2011)5478. MS are

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					progressing with its implementation.
					▪ Agreement has also been reached to allow Member States to use the Biometric Residence Permit card format as a residence card with wordings suggested. Work is on-going on improvements to the security design of the Uniform Format Visa and Residence permit.
		B: Improve the security of the application and issuance processes for identity/EU documentation.	PRES, COM, MS *(Germany, the Netherlands, UK, Austria)*	On-going.	The Frontiers / False Documents Working Party regularly exchanges information and best practices, as well as following up on recommendations. See further doc. 7994/13.
					The <u>LT</u> Presidency launched <u>in 2013 the</u> questionnaire on "exchange of information on EU family members residence permits" A summary and analysis of the replies will be established with a view to reaching an agreement on 16 December 2013 <u>as well as conclusions and recommendations in the document 1673/2013</u>.
		C: Improving the targeting of irregular movement of third-country nationals within the Schengen area, notably through enhancing knowledge on secondary movements given the widespread distribution of persons detected	MS, FRONTEX	On-going.	<u>Due to the increasing use of fraudulent breeder documents (birth, marriage and death certificates) to obtain genuine travel documents, work in going within a think Tank led by NL and the False documents WP regarding the improvement of the security breeder documents, which are considered to be the weakest link of the identity chain.</u>
					<u>Furthermore the False documents WP is dealing with the Presidency's initiative to assess the level of existing and possible additional forgery detection equipment at ports of entry to the EU with a view to updating Council Recommendation 98/C 189/02of 28 May</u>

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		staying illegally in the EU.			1998.The False documents WP is also dealing with the Presidency's initiative to promote a common approach towards certification/accreditation of Documents expertise Units (DEUs) tasked in the Member states of security documents' examination.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
VI. **Strategic priority area: Enhancing migration management, including cooperation on return practices**					
1. Ensuring that all Member States have efficient migration management systems in place, in order to be prepared for fluctuating migration pressures.	Putting in place a sustainable and credible EU policy approach to the management of migration and ensuring contingency measures are in place for unexpected flows of migration.	**A:** Ensure that EU legislation in the field of asylum and migration is fully implemented including the Return Directive and the Directive on Employers' Sanctions. This will also facilitate the efficient and effective operation of immigration systems, including processing and returning illegal migrants. **PRES GSC**	MS *(Denmark)*	On-going.	According to information provided by the COM, all MS and associated countries (except for one) have implemented the Return Directive. COM carried out an organised programme of work on the transposition of the Return Directive (2012-2013). In those cases in which it was not possible to find agreement and to obtain commitment from MS to change their legislation in accordance with requests from the Commission, EU-Pilot procedures are being launched.

On 28.3. 2014, the Commission submitted a Communication on EU Return Policy (8415/14) . In this Communication, the Commission indicates that all Member States have notified their national transposition measures on the Return Directive (Directive 2008/115/EC). Only one associated country, Iceland, has not yet notified full transposition. The EL Presidency aims at the adoption of Council conclusions on the Communication. |
| | Developing an early warning system based on data received by Member States. | **B**: Ensuring statistical data and analysis is in place. | COM, MS, EASO, FRONTEX *(Denmark)* | On-going. | The dialogue between EASO and Eurostat on availability of asylum statistics collected by Eurostat under Art. 4 of the Migration Statistics Regulation remains ongoing and has led to the revision of the EUROSTAT guidelines on migration statistics in regard to asylum. EASO will from 1 April 2014 begin direct data collection from MS under 4 indicators (asylum applications, withdrawals, pending cases and decision) on a monthly basis. Once confident of data quality, it will begin integrating analysis using the data into its regular analytical products (a restricted monthly report to EASO Management Board members, a |

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					public quarterly report and its annual report on the Situation of Asylum in the EU).
					FRONTEX has initiated discussions with Member States on the gathering of data related to passenger flow. In particular, data on passenger flow gathered for the purpose of regional analysis (on Western Balkans and at the Eastern land border) have already been used to improve the analysis.
					In addition, the EMN Bulletin provides an overview of the latest published (Eurostat) statistics. The EMN also serves to provide analysis of and statistics on topics of relevance to policymakers (e.g. its study on illegal migration available from: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/reports/docs/emn-studies/irregular-migration/0a_emn_synthesis_report_irregular_migration_publication_april_2013_en.pdf
					FRONTEX, under the lead of the European Commission, began preparations in October 2012 for a system that includes the structured exchange of information and statistics on intra-Schengen detections of Secondary Movements of illegal migrants, following the cancellation of the CIREFI WG which was previously responsible for reporting on this data. This project is being managed within the framework of Risk Analysis Tactical meetings and is expected to deliver a first report by the end of 2013.
		C: EASO will develop an early warning system	MS, EUROSTAT, COM	End 2012.	EASO has designed (in cooperation with DG HOME, EUROSTAT and FRONTEX) a table of proposed 22 asylum indicators which would provide a comprehensive

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
		based on data received by Member States, which will include tailor-made assistance for Member States' asylum systems.	*(Denmark)*		overview of the functioning of the CEAS. A Group for the Provision of Statistics (GPS) has been established, and its next meeting, in June 2014 will analyse the implementation of Stage II of EPS (i.e. the collection and analysis of the 4 first instance indicators noted above). The GPS comprises experts nominated by Member States to be the responsible persons in regard to asylum data-collection and statistics. The network will operate in a similar way to the Risk Analysis Network (FRAN) built by FRONTEX. EASO and Frontex have begun weekly video conferences aimed at sharing information in order to better understand the link between irregular migration and seeking asylum.
		D: Closely monitor developments in respect of migration movements from Syria.	EASO *(Denmark)*	First semester 2012.	On-going monitoring of the situation by COM, EASO, IOM and UNHCR, including through the monthly Bordernet conferences set up by the COM with the participation of Frontex, Europol and EASO.

Member States called for establishment of the RPP in the Middle East by the end of 2013 / beginning 2014 in order to respond to the Syrian crisis, as well as for increased support from EASO and FRONTEX to monitor migratory flows to the EU. Since then, Member States have provided solidarity measures by stepping up financial support to Syria and gaining experience from the implementation of the EUREMA Pilot Project.

EASO organised a workshop on Syria on 28 and 29 June 2012 in Malta.
In August 2012, upon request of the European Commission in the context of the SY NET a follow-up workshop on Syria focused on scenario-based policy issues. On 18-19 March 2013, EASO organised a Practical Cooperation meeting on Syria and made a |

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					statistical analysis of the flow which showed the wide differences in MS' treatment of the influx and revealed important information about the characteristics of the applicants. EASO aims at holding another Practical Cooperation meeting on asylum seekers from Syria before summer 2014. Some MS (such as DE and FI), are taking initiatives regarding resettlement of refugees. Following a call for resettlement / humanitarian admission of up to 30.000 Syrians in 2013-2014, many Member States have responded offering in total some 15.000 places. Several MS (such as DE, FI, SE, AT and FR)), have confirmed that they will receive Syrian refugees on humanitarian admission or resettlement for 2013/2014.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
2. Maximising the potentials of a common EU approach in the field of return, both voluntary and forced, in compliance with existing EU acquis.	To increase numbers of returns of <u>illegal</u> migrants and to develop swift, sustainable and effective return using a common EU approach, including more effective joint return operations.	**A:** Ensuring that MS share best practices on return (both voluntary and forced) and encouraging cooperation between the stakeholders in the field.	MS,FRONTEX, IOM,COM, WP on Migration(expulsion)	<u>2014</u>	<u>a) The EMN recently took over an enhanced role in providing a platform for experts in the field of return and reintegration (Return and reintegration Experts' Group (REG)) which aims at improving the operational cooperation among MS.</u> <u>b)</u> Development of EURINT Phase 2 with selected EU partners to increase structural co-operation between EU Member States and third countries to increase commitment in terms of re-documentation and return. The kick-off meeting took place in The Hague on 17 September 2013. During this meeting the country lists were established and the working groups are expected to hold their first meetings before the end of the year.

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		B: Exploring the opportunities to make joint return operations more effective and to make more effective use of detention capacities. This should include capacity building, coordination and organisation of joint return operations.	MS, FRONTEX	On-going.	In accordance with the FRONTEX Programme of Work, 30-40 joint return operations are planned for 2013. a) The Project Attica on supporting the Hellenic Police in return capacity building and sharing knowledge. Sharing experiences of MS experts with EL officers will continue in 2013/2014. b) Moreover FRONTEX provided standardised trainings for MS/SAC Return Officers - Escort Leaders and direct training in Athens for Hellenic Return Officers – Escort Officers (under Project Attica).
		C: PRES questionnaire and synthesis on possible common EU approach and best practices.	PRES	On-going.	The PRES questionnaire has been issued. Results are being examined. See item: I.1.A.
		D: MS to regularly inform FRONTEX of their needs for assistance or coordination by the agency. FRONTEX should draw up a rolling operational plan to provide MS with the necessary operational support.	MS, FRONTEX	On-going.	The content of and procedure for the Rolling Operational Plan (RoP) was adopted by the FRONTEX Management Board in 2012. The RoP will serve as a platform for identifying needs in Member States for operational assistance and coordination and the planning of such operational support.

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		E: FRONTEX should enhance cooperation with third country authorities on best practices on acquisition of travel documents and return – and regularly report back to the Council and the FRONTEX Management Board on results achieved.	FRONTEX	On-going.	FRONTEX intends to identify Best Practice in cooperation with relevant authorities in Nigeria. This best practice will later serve as a skeleton for further best practices with other relevant third countries.
		F: Support voluntary return programmes, improve operational co-operation on assisted voluntary return programmes.	MS,COM	On-going	The EMN recently took over an enhanced role in providing a platform for experts in the field of return and reintegration (Return and reintegration Experts' Group (REG)) which aims at improving the operational cooperation among MS.

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VII. Strategic priority area: Preventing illegal immigration from and via the Southern Mediterranean countries					
1. Strengthening capacities of Southern Mediterranean countries as regards migration management.	Enhance operational cooperation between the responsible authorities of South Mediterranean countries, MS and EU agencies.	**A**: FRONTEX should strengthen its operational cooperation with the competent border control authorities in the Southern Mediterranean countries.	FRONTEX	On-going.	The host Member States of all FRONTEX Joint Operations are supported to integrate third country border guards as observers into such operations or to nominate suitable contact points for dealing with urgent matters regarding the operation. In addition, FRONTEX supports the EU-funded EuroMed Migration III project. This project increases awareness of FRONTEX's role in the third countries concerned. Frontex delivered a presentation to the 4th Irregular EUROMED Migration Training session in September 2013. In line with its revised mandate, FRONTEX will further develop relations with the Southern Mediterranean countries in accordance with its Programme of Work for 2014. DEVCO will fund a project to support the practical cooperation of FRONTEX and EASO with Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan.
		B: EASO should contribute to building asylum capacity in the Southern Mediterranean countries.	EASO	2012 and onwards.	EASO has been fully operational since July 2011. All activities have intensified during the start-up phase, including significant resources allocated to assist Greece in establishing its asylum system. These activities are fully accounted for in the EASO Work Programme, which is discussed and adopted in the context of the EASO Management Board. The Office remains ready to provide further assistance to any Member States under pressure and/or at the request of the COM, in the context of the implementation of Article 33 of the Dublin Regulation.

Challenge	Goal	Activity	Responsible party	Target Date	Status/Observations
					Member States are encouraged to continue to support the activities of the Office by, for example, deploying experts in the framework of asylum support teams and in other ways that can contribute to the fulfilment of the agency's mandate.
					EASO will start developing its external dimension activities in line with its external action strategy in 2014 as envisaged in its Annual Work Programme.
					DEVCO will fund a project to support the practical cooperation of FRONTEX and EASO with Morocco, Tunisia and Jordan.
		C. Strengthen the capacity of the Southern Mediterranean countries to control and carry out surveillance of their external borders and for the return of illegal migrants to their countries of origin in a dignified manner.	MS, COM	On-going.	In 2012, CEPOL organised a course "Markets, related to illegal immigration, detecting, tackling and repatriation". A further workshop was organised by CEPOL in Greece on 15-16 October 2012.