



26 February 2019

IISG RESPONSE ACTION 2018-2019

Introduction

Based on the initial request from the Western Balkans beneficiaries under the Integrative Internal Security Governance and following the migratory trends since the second half of 2017 in the Western Balkans, the Integrative Internal Security Governance (IISG) Support Group and the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) Ljubljana as the Lead partner of the 3rd Pillar of the Western Balkan Border Security initiative (WBBSi) have launched the IISG Migration Action. The Action is also aligned with the primary role and function of the IISG and IISG SG to coordinate and react to emerging developments in the area of the internal security in the Western Balkans.

The initial proposal for the Action was drafted and communicated to the partners and beneficiaries in July 2018 for review and comments. The overarching aim of the proposed IISG Action was to coordinate a regional approach to migratory pressures and occurring forms of serious and organised crime, find synergies and form joint answers to the needs of the Western Balkan region and their active role in EU-Western Balkan security.

The Action was to be further utilised through the development and implementation of the Rapid Reaction Plan (RRP), **aligning existing and relevant capacities and activities of IISG Partners present in the Region**, incl. Frontex, Europol, IOM, JOO and others. The Action will be enforced complementary to the actions listed in the three Integrative Plans of Action (iPAs) of the IISG for the period 2018–2020 (WBCTi iPA, WBCSCi iPA and WBBSi iPA), which directly respond to the needs of the region as identified by the Western Balkan authorities.

The assessment of the needs and priorities for the RRP was achieved through three consecutive meetings of different region-wide forums, corresponding content-wise to all three respective IISG pillars:

for WBBSi – a meeting of the Chiefs of Border Police Services of the Western Balkans (18–19 July in Tirana),
for WBCSCi – a regional meeting of Directors of Criminal Police within the PCC SEE (1-3 October in Tirana),
for WBCTi – a meeting of the CTI (Counter-Terrorism Initiative) operational regional network, the WBCTi pillar operational arm (23-25 October in Portorož).

The final draft of the Rapid Reaction Plan (RRP) for the period 2018 – 2019 was shared with the WB Beneficiaries and partners on 29 January 2019 for review and comments.

Based on the received feedback and inputs, it was acknowledged that current title “Rapid Reaction Plan” does not reflect its core nature and purpose. Therefore, the title was to be changed to correlate better with its content into IISG RESPONSE ACTION 2018-2019.

It comprises a concise list of actions. Further, a document listing the needs, meeting conclusions and proposed actions is enclosed in Annex 1. Thirdly, complementing the IISG RESPONSE ACTION 2018-2019, a long-term perspective view is presented with a logical framework in Annex 2.

IISG RESPONSE ACTION 2018-2019

The purpose of the IISG Response Action 2018-2019 is to provide a list of concrete and feasible actions which could have a direct and tangible impact on the situation on the ground in the field of illegal smuggling of migrants through the WB region, based on the feedback from the IISG beneficiaries and other key partners, as described above.

The IISG RESPONSE ACTION 2018-2019 encompasses only those actions which could and will be executed within the time framework set to run until the end of 2019. It is to be underlined that the IISG RESPONSE ACTION 2018-2019 is to be perceived as a living document, providing initial systematic overview of actions in this field, simultaneously providing a significant starting point in order to avoid overlapping and duplication as well as to increase the effectiveness of the activities under the various projects through anticipated synergies and coordination.

As it could be seen from the list below, some of these actions have already been successfully executed. Joint Operations Drino I, Drino II and Tuzi resulted in enhanced national and regional capacities for management of enhanced migration flow through introduction of various measures targeting different aspects of migration management (e.g. debriefings/interviews with migrants, exchange of specific knowledge and introduction of specialised equipment for surveillance of [green] border, delivery of specific trainings, gap identification etc.). The Operations also resulted in significant operational results as over 100 irregular migrants were apprehended, several migrants were provided urgent medical attention, several weapon items confiscated, and relevant operational information on modus operandi, routes, etc. were obtained during the interviews.

Completed actions were financed through the already available budget under the IISG pillars WBCSCi and WBBSi.

Rapid Reaction Plan 2018-2019 – List of Actions

#	ACTION	LEAD PARTNER	INVOLVED	LOCATION	SCOPE	TIMELINE	STATUS	FINANCING
1	Joint Operation DRINO	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	ALB-GRE border	Border police	July 2018	completed	IPA II 2017 / GIZ
2	Joint Operation TUZI	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	ALB-MNE border	Border police	October 2018	completed	IPA II 2017 / GIZ
3	Joint Operation DRINO 2	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	ALB-GRE border	Border police (with involvement of the prosecution service)	December 2018	completed	IPA II 2017 / GIZ
4	Joint Operation	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	BiH	Criminal police and border police	By May 2019		TBD
5	Study visit(s) to JOO	JOO	JOO	Vienna, Austria	Border police and criminal police	By December 2019		JOO/TAIEX?
6	JOO visits in the beneficiary countries – practical workshops	JOO	JOO	WB	Border police and criminal police	By December 2019		JOO/TAIEX?
7	Joint Operation with executive powers on the territory of key WB countries at their borders with MS	FRONTEX		ALB-GRE; FYROM-GRE; SRB, MNE, BiH	Border Control; cross-border crime and capacity building operational activities	Starting after the entry into force of the respective Status Agreement	Planning / Implemen- tation	FRONTEX

8	Targeted on-the-ground trainings for improvement of the quality of interviewing techniques with migrants	DCAF/FRONTEX		WB	Border police and criminal police	By December 2019		TBD
9	EUROPOL Joint Action Days focusing on OCGs facilitating irregular migrations and smuggling of migrants	EUROPOL		WB	Border police and criminal police	By December 2019		TBD
10	Workshop/Study visit on use of EUROPOL communication channels, databases, platforms and analytical tools (IRU, SIRIUS)	EUROPOL		WB	Border police and criminal police	By December 2019		TBD
11	TASK FORCE BALKAN and OP RISK meeting in Vienna - exchange of operational data and intelligence related to OCGs involved in facilitation of illegal immigrations	JOO	JOO, EUROPOL	WB	Criminal police and border police	February 2019	completed	JOO/BMI AT
12	Joint Operation TUZI II	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	ALB-MNE border	Border police	By June 2019	Requested by MNE	TBD
13	Campaigns for promotion and informing migrants on voluntary return	IOM		WB		By December 2019		IOM
14	National training courses for interpreters	DCAF		WB	Border police and criminal police	By December 2019		NORAD
15	Workshops and training on fake and forged documents	PCC SEE	In collaboration with FRONTEX	WB (PCC SEE)	Border police and criminal police	By December 2019		NORAD

16	Temporary deployment of police officials under the PCC SEE to foreign jurisdictions in ongoing investigations.	PCC SEE		WB (PCC SEE)	Criminal police	By December 2019		PCC SEE / IPA II 2017
17	Financial investigations in connection to trafficking in human beings and migrant smuggling	CEPOL	EUROPOL FRONTEX	WB	Criminal police, FIUs Judicial personnel	July 2019		IPA II 2017 / CEPOL Financial investigation project
18	Task Force Meeting	SELEC		SELEC HQ	To bring together experts from the SELEC MSs and partners to discuss on the latest threats, to initiate joint investigations and regional operations, to present SELEC latest report on smuggling of migrants, etc.	June 2019		SELEC budget and external funding (if available)
19	Initiating Joint Investigation	SELEC		Southeast Europe	Exchange operational information on joint cases	2019		SELEC budget and external funding (if available)
20	Regional operation Mirage 2019 (smuggling of migrants) within the new established SELEC OCU (Operational Center Unit)	SELEC		Southeast Europe	Exchange operational information	2019 (when MSs agree)		
21	Tour de Capitals – national training courses for Risk Analysis	DCAF		WB	Border police	By April 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ

22	Regional Risk Analysis workshop	DCAF	EUROPOL	WB	Border police	March 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ
23	Planning of Common and Coordinated Measures workshop	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	WB	Border police	April 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ
24	Training and practical exercise in Common Operational Measures	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	TBD	Border police, Criminal police, Prosecution - TBD	May 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ
25	Training and practical exercise in Common Operational Measures	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	TBD	Border police, Criminal police, Prosecution - TBD	June 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ
26	Training and practical exercise in Common Operational Measures	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	TBD	Border police, Criminal police, Prosecution - TBD	September 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ
27	Training and practical exercise in Common Operational Measures	DCAF	EUROPOL, FRONTEX	TBD	Border police, Criminal police, Prosecution - TBD	November 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ
28	Train the Trainers Course – bridging the gap between theory and practice in the field of migration management	DCAF		TBD	Educators, Trainers – Police, Military	August 2019		IPA II 2017 / GIZ

ANNEX 1 – needs, conclusions and proposals

Border Police - meeting of the Chiefs of Border Police Services of the Western Balkans (18–19 July in Tirana)

1. The Frontex system of collecting and sharing information on daily basis including the possibility of development of the “Early warning system” should be strongly supported;
2. With the entering into force of the Status agreements between Frontex and WB Countries, the Agency will coordinate deployments of EBCG Teams with executive powers and technical equipment.
3. Increasing the use of mixed patrols along the common borders with the aim to simplify the readmission procedure;
4. Ensuring that all migrants undergo a proper registration procedure, including the collection of fingerprints and face images,
5. Promoting and informing migrants on voluntary return.
6. Based on actual risks identified by the Risk Analysis, foreign police officers to the most exposed border areas, following the example of the deployment of over 140 foreign officers to the Macedonian/Greek border and the regional common operation “DRINO” in the Albanian/Greek border, shall be temporarily deployed.
7. Improving the quality of interviewing migrants:
 - a. Performing interviews in the migrants’ native languages with the support of qualified interpreters,
 - b. Performing structured interviews to extract information on organized criminal groups involved, routes, other intelligence, proper identification of migrants, including their nationality, recognition of elements of trafficking in human beings and human smuggling, as well as indicating foreign terrorist fighters,
 - c. Trainings for debriefers and screeners
8. Additional financial resources are required to improve technical capacities for efficient and effective detection, apprehension and proceedings of migrants.
9. To minimize possibilities of abusing the asylum procedure by using all existing legal means. If necessary, to propose amendments of the national legislation on international protection.
10. To establish a legal base and regional platform for the exchange of personal data on migrants,
11. Intensifying cooperation with EU agencies – Frontex, Europol and CEPOL,
12. Providing voluntary return with the support of the international partners, especially IOM;

Criminal Police - regional meeting of Directors of Criminal Police within the PCC SEE (1-3 October in Tirana)

1. Enhancing the exchange of operational intelligence data in real time, including the exploitation of Europol’s SIENA channel and Operational Agreements between Europol and the Beneficiaries.
2. Performing joint operations, including the exchange of officers from the IISG Beneficiaries’ law enforcement authorities, utilizing the PCC SEE as the legal basis and supported by the JOO, Europol and other relevant partners.
3. Performing joint operations involving both the border police and criminal police services of the IISG Beneficiaries,
4. Awareness-raising on the capacities of the JOO in providing services and assistance.
5. Improving interviewing techniques of criminal investigators with migrants.
6. Increasing the knowledge and understanding of the IISG Beneficiaries’ law enforcement authorities related to the techniques for investigating money flows of OCGs facilitating illegal migration, especially regarding the hawala money-transfer scheme.
7. Enhancing the capacities of the IISG Beneficiaries’ law enforcement authorities to perform online investigations of cybercrime and the dark web.

CT - the meeting of the CTI operational regional network, as the Western Balkan Counter-Terrorism (WBCTi) Pillar operational arm, (23-25 October in Portorož)

1. CTI welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the RRP under the IISG Migration Action.
2. CTI agrees with most of the needs and proposed actions as identified by the border and criminal police.
3. CTI propose to have the CT units involved and represented in the joint operations and to have permanent exchange of data and criminal intelligence with border police, criminal police and services for foreigners, in relation to eventual detection of possible FTF returnees.
4. CTI join the position to have more enhanced capacities and capabilities for online investigations, Internet traffic and open source analysis, as well as those of social networks and dark web.

Annex 2 - Long-term perspective and logical framework accompanying RRP

Outcome	Objective	Output
<i>Improvement of national and regional capacities for collecting relevant information, development of national and regional risk analyses and improvement of possibility for integration of data into an “Early Warning System”</i>	Countries collect and share information on daily basis, based on Frontex system and recommendations	
	Early Warning System being regularly used – messages exchanged	To be signed MOU by RS and ME Established Early Warning System
Increasing the use of mixed patrols along the common borders with the aim to simplify the readmission procedure	Countries make use of mixed patrols to simplify the readmission procedure of migrants	Defined common borders in exposed border areas
		Defined procedures for setting up mixed patrols
		Defined procedures for readmission
		Signing of readmission agreement (if needed)
Ensuring that all migrants undergo a proper registration procedure, including the collection of fingerprints and face images	Establishing the system for registration of migrants	
	Collected information on migrants	
	Exchange of information on migrants	
Ensuring that all migrants undergo a structured interview for collecting intelligence and/or evidence and that all relevant information or intelligence are shared within the region.	<i>Improvement of intelligence gathering from migrants: (including data on route, target destination, phone numbers and contacts of smugglers and persons who provided instructions, costs, payments, travel documents...)</i>	ROP for interviewing of migrants
		CID investigators are regularly involved in interviews of migrants
		National analytical products based on intelligence gathered from migrants are available for investigators
		All operational data are shared with JOO
		In cases where CID investigators are not involved in interviews with migrants, intelligence gathered are shared in proper form with CID
Awareness raising on the capacities of the JOO	All investigators and BP staff make use of the capacities of the JOO when relevant	National CP will issue instructions for national, regional and local level
		All CID and BP staff will be informed on all levels
Promoting and informing migrants on voluntary return	<i>Informing migrants on the possibility for return to origin country</i>	Migrants are informed on the possibility for a voluntary return. Number of voluntary return cases is increased

Temporary deployment of foreign police officers to the exposed border areas, based on actual risks identified by the Risk Analysis	Countries make use of Common (Joint) operational measures when addressing certain threats to (border) security	Established procedures for deployment of police officers to other countries
		Prepared Risk analysis (regional/ national)
		Established procedures on setting up Common (joint) operational measures
	<i>CID departments, JOO and Europol taking part of Common operations in border area</i>	Established procedures for deployment of police officers to other countries
	Countries propose common activities in <i>the areas where migrants are held / exposed areas</i>	Prepared Risk analysis (regional/ national)
Improving the quality of interviewing migrants	Trained debriefers and screeners are being used for conducting structured interviews based on established SOP	Developed and maintained Pool of Debriefers
		Trained debriefers and screeners for conducting structured interviews
	Interviewers perform structured interviews with migrants based on established SOP	Developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on performing structured interviews
		(Recruitment criteria for debriefers and screeners, conditions for debriefing, debriefing procedures)
	Interpreters are being used in interviews with migrants	Developed and maintained Pool of interpreters
		Trained interpreters for conducting interviews with migrants
Additional financial resources are required to improve technical capacities for efficient and effective detection, apprehension and proceedings of migrants	Technical capacities for effective detection, apprehension and proceedings of migrants are improved	Acquired financial resources
Enhanced investigation of money flows related to migrant smuggling		
Enhanced online investigations (dark net)		

To minimize possibilities of abusing the asylum procedure by using all existing legal means	States make use of national and international legal provisions that minimise the possibility for abuse of asylum procedure	Identified measures in legislation, relevant for migration management in relation to possibility of asylum procedure abuse
To establish a legal base and regional platform for the exchange of personal data on migrants,	Countries exchange information on migrants with aim of reducing the abuse of the asylum procedure	Established legal base for exchange of personal data on migrants
		Established platform and procedure for exchange of personal data on migrants
Intensifying cooperation with EU agencies – Frontex, Europol and CEPOL,	Countries are taking advantage of the capacities of EU agencies when addressing irregular migration	Established procedures for utilising resources of EU Agencies when addressing irregular migration
		Signed necessary agreements for cooperation with EU Agencies
Providing voluntary return with the support of the international partners, especially IOM;	Number of voluntary return cases is increased	Established procedures for voluntary return
Concluding bi – lateral readmission agreements with countries of origin and transit countries	WB states shall start negotiations with top	