

Consolidated Annual Activity Report 2018

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Glossary

| | |
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| BN | Annual Bilateral Negotiations |
| ABC | Automated Border Control |
| AFIC | Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community |
| BCP | Border Crossing Point |
| CELBET | Customs Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border Expert |
| CCC | Common Core Curriculum |
| CCWP | Customs Cooperation Working Party |
| CSDP | Common Security and Defence Policy |
| CIRAM | Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model |
| CRO | Collecting Return Operation |
| DG | Directorate-General |
| EASO | European Asylum Support Office |
| EC | European Commission |
| ECRet | European Centre for Returns |
| EBCG | European Border and Coast Guard |
| EBCG Day | European Border and Coast Guard Day |
| EFCA | European Fisheries Control Agency |
| EFS | Eurosur Fusion Services |
| EMPACT | European Multidisciplinary Platform against Criminal Threats |
| EMSA | European Maritime Safety Agency |
| ETIAS | European travel information and authorisation system |
| EUBAM | European Union Border Assistance Mission |
| Eunavfor MED | European Union Naval Force Mediterranean |
| Europol | European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation |
| Eurosur | European Surveillance System |
| FER | Frontex' Evaluation Report |
| FISRoP | Frontex' Internal Structure and Rules of Procedure |
| FAR | Frontex Application for Return |
| FLO | Frontex Liaison Officer |
| FRE | Forced-Return Escort |
| FRM | Forced-Return Monitors |
| FRO | Fundamental Rights Officer |
| Frontex | European Border and Coast Guard Agency |
| HR | Human Resources |
| IAS | Internal Audit Service |
| ICC | International Coordination Centre |
| ICF | Internal Control Framework |
| ICS | Internal Control Standard |
| ICT | Information and Communication Technology |
| IPA | Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance |
| IT | Information Technology |
| JAD | Joint-Action Day |
| JHA | Justice and Home Affairs |
| JO | Joint Operation |

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------|
| JORA | Joint Operation Reporting Application |
| JRO | Joint Return Operation |
| LPU | Legal and Procurement Unit |
| MAS | Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance |
| OSINT | Open Source Intelligence |
| RAU | Risk Analysis Unit |
| REX | Rapid Intervention Exercise |
| RPAS | Remotely-Piloted Aircraft System |
| SAC | Schengen associated country |
| TCN | Third Country National |
| THB | Trafficking in Human Beings |
| TRU | Training Unit |

Introduction

Article 68(3)(d) of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation⁽¹⁾ stipulates that each year the Executive Director shall **prepare the annual activity report** on the agency's activities and submit it to the Management Board. Article 62(2)(i) of the European Border and Coast Guard regulation states that the **Management Board shall adopt** an annual activity report of the agency for the previous year and forward it, by 1 July at the latest, to the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors.

To guide the readers and recipients of the information the report has been divided into three main parts, the first two of which form the *Annual activity report 2018*.

I. The **first part** (*1. Developments; and 2. Strategic action areas*) of the annual activity report contains comprehensive and easily understandable information regarding Frontex's work. It outlines:

- the situation at the external borders in the course of 2018,
- developments at policy and agency level,
- the new and enhanced mandate of the agency; and
- the main activities in each of the strategic action area during 2018.

It also reports on:

- cooperation with third countries,
- the way in which fundamental rights underpin Frontex's coordinated activities,
- public access to documents and the management of sensitive operational information.

As stated in Article 26 and Article 28(8) of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation, the main activities in each of the strategic action areas also provide a comparative analysis of the results of evaluations of core operational activities with a view to enhancing the quality, coherence and effectiveness of future activities.

As stated in Article 47 of the Frontex financial regulation ⁽²⁾, the authorising officer shall **report** to the Management Board on the performance of his duties in the form of an **annual activity report** and **submit it for assessment**. No later than 1 July each year the report, together with its assessment, shall be sent by the Management Board to the European Parliament, the Council of the European Union, the European Commission and the European Court of Auditors.

II. The **second part** (*3. Key results and progress towards the achievement of general and specific objectives; 4. Budgetary and financial management; and 5. Management and internal control*) represents a major instrument for accountability management and constitutes the basis on which the Executive Director as the authorising officer takes his responsibility for:

- the management of human and financial resources with reference to the general and specific objectives set out in the work programme;
- the efficiency and effectiveness of the internal control systems, including an overall assessment of the costs and benefits of controls;
- the accounts and the report on budgetary and financial management;
- the indication of the results of the operations with reference to the set objectives and the associated risks.

III. The **third part** contains additional detailed information on the previous parts of the report.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2016/1624 of 14 September 2016 on the European Border and Coast Guard (OJ L 251, 16.9.2016, p. 1).

⁽²⁾ Management Board Decision No 01/2014 of 8 January 2014.

Mission Statement

The European Border and Coast Guard Regulation entered into force on 6 October 2016. The extended and enhanced mandate drove the need to revise the mission, vision and values applied by the agency. The process of reevaluating the mission statement took until the end of 2017. When adopting the *Programming document 2018-2020* the Management Board also adopted the revised mission, vision and values of the Agency.

Mission

Together with the Member States, we ensure safe and well-functioning external borders providing security.

Vision

The European Area of Freedom, Security and Justice.

Values

- **we are professional**
we have the knowledge, skills and competencies needed to fulfil our mission efficiently with high ethical standards and we continuously strive for excellence to improve our performance;
- **we are respectful**
we recognize people, institutions and their roles and demonstrate respect by treating these as valuable and important;
- **we seek cooperation**
together with the Member States' relevant national authorities and with participation of other stakeholders we manage the EU external borders together and seek cooperation with non-EU countries;
together, we cooperate and collaborate across the organisation as well as with external stakeholders in order to accomplish common goals and objectives;
- **we are accountable**
we are trusted with a shared responsibility to implement European integrated border management;
we are trustworthy in fulfilling our responsibilities in our work, its timeliness and quality;
- **we care**
as European public agents we serve the interests of citizens because we care about people and believe in European values;

1. Developments

1.1. The situation at the external borders in 2018

Member States reported 150,114 illegal border-crossings in 2018, representing a 27% decrease comparing with 2017. The most decisive development for the overall level of migratory pressure in 2018 in fact dates back to July 2017, when the sudden reversal in the number of irregular migrants detected in the Central Mediterranean took place. This reversal continues to be the most significant development at the EU's external borders since the implementation of the EU-Turkey statement. The decreasing trend in migrant arrivals on the Central Mediterranean route, which lasted throughout 2018, was the primary reason for the decrease in the number of illegal border-crossings as compared to 2017. On this route, the other third countries of departure – Tunisia, Algeria and Turkey – equally had fewer successful departures. Egypt in 2018 did not see any departures of migrants to Europe on the sea route.

With the number of illegal border-crossings plummeting on the Central Mediterranean route, the spotlight moved onto the Western Mediterranean route, where in 2018 mostly Moroccan and sub-Saharan migrants crossed the Strait of Gibraltar or the Alboran Sea in record numbers, making the Western Mediterranean route the most frequently used route into Europe in 2018. Morocco was also the country of departure for a slightly over than half of the migrants that targeted the Canary Islands on the Western African route. Towards the end of the year, an increase in prevention activities by the Moroccan authorities was noticed, a development due essentially to the improved and reinforced cooperation with Moroccan authorities.

On the Eastern Mediterranean route, the most significant development of 2018 was arguably the implementation of a relocation and return programme in Turkey for irregular Syrian migrants, which shifted the nationality makeup on the Eastern Mediterranean Sea route in the second half of the year. The Western Balkan route in 2018 saw shifts between the Greek-Albanian corridor and the Serbian-centred corridor. Throughout the year, most of the migratory pressure on the route materialised at the Bosnian and Herzegovinian-Croatian border, and also, to a lesser extent, on Serbia's border with Hungary, Croatia and Romania.

In 2018, at the Eastern land border, another third country, Russia by introducing a temporary change in its visa policy created an opportunity to reach the EU's external borders. For the 2018 FIFA World Cup™, Russia allowed travellers a visa-free entry to the Russian Federation for those in possession of match tickets. This enabled migrants to reach the EU's external borders via Russia, and also via Belarus and Ukraine, with migrants attempting to enter the EU illegally. This contributed to an increase in detections as compared with 2017, however, still remaining at much lower levels than on other routes.

Corresponding with the changes in the flows of the main migration routes, the migrant population in 2018 changed its nationality makeup. Syrians remained the most common nationality as a result of Turkish relocation and return programme taking effect during the second half of the year. Moroccans were the second most common nationality, before Afghans and Iraqis. Turkish nationals, as mentioned above, increased in number and were the fifth-most common nationality in 2018.

In 2018, Member States reported an increase in the detection of clandestine entries. Nevertheless, the number of detected attempts of clandestine entry continued to be arguably below the level to be expected in times of tightened border surveillance at the green and blue borders.

Secondary movements continued on a large scale during 2018. Member States without external land and sea borders reported thousands of inland detections of illegal stay. These could, however, be overstays after having entered via air borders. Since Eurodac registered high numbers in both land and sea clandestine crossings in 2018, this can be seen as evidence for increased scale of secondary movement. In this context, the increase in the inland detection of people smugglers (+13 %) is also an indication of the involvement of organised crime networks in smuggling migrants to their countries of destination. Moreover, a significant increase in document fraud detections on secondary movements was recorded in 2018. In fact, the number of document fraud detections on secondary movements inside the EU/Schengen area in 2018 reached its highest level since 2013.

The year 2018 once again signified a year of heavy workload for border guards in all Member States, who were faced with another increase in entry and exit checks to be performed at border crossing points with a further rise in passenger flows and the 2017 expansion of systematic checks on those passengers enjoying the right of free movement under EU law. This meant at times delays for passengers at certain border-crossing points. The second line, was as well under pressure in many Member States due to an increase in refusals of entry along the external borders, but also by the aforementioned increase in document fraud detections on secondary movements. In particular, at the borders with Ukraine, the increase in issued refusals of entry to Ukrainians was significant. The categories of refusals reported imply that visa liberalisation wrongly suggests to travellers that they no longer need to justify the purpose and conditions of stay and to present

sufficient means of subsistence on request. As regards exit checks, illegal stay detections on exit at air, land and sea borders increased slightly. This as well implied an increase in workload in particular for the second line of border checks.

The number of effective returns in 2018 once again fell short of the decisions issued by Member States to return migrants: Around 148,000 migrants who were not granted asylum or subsidiary protection were returned to their countries of origin, this figure represents slightly more than half the total number of return decisions issued. In particular, no measurable progress was made as regards returns to West Africa – while the number of return decisions issued increased by roughly 80% compared with 2017, effective returns remained unchanged, reflecting deficits in cooperation and administrative capacity in countries of origin.

In 2018, there was an increase in all indicators of irregular migration at air borders. The airports reporting to Frontex show some 16,000 asylum claims³, which represents an increase of 12% in relation to 2017, of which over 2,800 asylum applications were recorded on intra EU/Schengen flights. Approximately 3,000 were related to migrants abusing the transit visa waiver and claiming asylum on arrival, mainly at Madrid airport. The unilateral re-imposition of specific transit visa regimes on some nationalities by some MS/SAC has led to displacement of the abuse to other EU airports, where the transit visa is not required.

³ An application for political asylum does not in itself represent an irregular process. However, in order for a migrant to lodge an application for asylum at a MS/SAC airport they may in some instances have had to obtain forged, counterfeit or otherwise improperly obtained documentation from a criminal network, or to have obtained a Schengen visa by making a false declaration as to their intentions, or to have abused the direct airside visa transit waiver on arrival at an MS/SAC airports. Therefore asylum is one of the indicators that help assessing a number of activities concerning the abuse of legal travel or migratory processes for irregular migration at air borders.

1.2. Developments at policy level

2018 was marked by a high level of legislative and policy developments in the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) domain. As 2019 is the final year of the 5-year mandates of both the European Commission and European Parliament, 2018 represented the final opportunity for the European Commission to propose such legislation within this domain that could be agreed on during this legislative timeline. The most important initiative in relation to the agency was the proposal for a new European Border and Coast Guard Regulation. The new text was tabled on 12 September and followed on from the June 2018 European Council meeting where the EU leaders confirmed the need for a more effective control of the external borders of the EU and agreed that the role of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency should be further strengthened through increased resources and an enhanced mandate.

The European Commission proposal aimed at providing the European Border and Coast Guard Agency with the resources and the mandate to fully respond to a level of ambition needed to effectively protect the EU's external borders and ensure EU solidarity on migration and border management. The central element of the proposal is to establish a new standing corps of 10,000 operational EU staff with executive powers and their own equipment to ensure that the EU has the necessary capabilities in place to intervene wherever and whenever needed – along the EU's external borders as well as in non-EU countries. The staff of the standing corps would be able to carry out border control and return tasks in the same way as the border guards and return specialists of the Member States. Furthermore, the agency's mandate will be increased in order to enhance its support to the Member States in returning third country nationals who no longer have the right to remain on the EU territory. Notwithstanding this increased support, the final decision regarding return will nevertheless remain within the competence of Member States.

The new European Border and Coast Guard proposal should also be viewed in conjunction with the proposal for the new multiannual financial framework (MFF) for 2021–2027. The new MFF foresees a total of EUR 9.44 billion in connection with the planned new EBCG Regulation (mainly to cover the cost of the 10,000-strong standing corps and for the agency to acquire its own technical equipment for operational deployments). The MFF is the EU instrument which sets the limits for the annual general budgets of the EU. It determines how much in total and by activity heading the EU may spend/commit each year. The Commission proposed an overall EU budget of EUR 1.135 trillion in commitments (in 2018 prices) over seven years – 1.11% of the EU27's gross national income (GNI). The MFF is made up of 7 Headings, including 'Security and Defence', 'Migration and Border Management' and 'Neighbourhood and the World'. Additionally, the European Commission has proposed sectoral legislative texts, including:

- An Integrated Border Management Fund (IBMF, totalling EUR 9.3bn) which is made up of two separate instruments: 'Border Management and Visa (BMVI)' and 'Customs Control Equipment (CCE)' that will support the implementation of European IBM and the common visa policy, and contribute to adequate and equivalent customs controls through the purchase, maintenance and upgrade of customs control equipment;
- An Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF, EUR 10.4bn) providing Member States with funding for the development of the common European asylum system, integration, and countering irregular migration including returns;
- An Internal Security Fund (ISF, EUR 2.5bn) providing funding in the area of security, combatting serious and organised crime, terrorism and other security-related threats.

On 12 September, the European Commission also came forward with a recast of the Directive on common standards and procedures in Member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals ('Returns Directive'). Making returns more effective and stepping up the return rate throughout the European Union has been a priority for the European Commission, as stated in the European Agenda on Migration (2015), the EU Action Plan on Returns (2015), and in the Renewed Action Plan on Returns (2017). The aim of the proposed recast directive is to clarify and further harmonise the existing rules on returns to maximise their effectiveness and ensure more consistent application across Member States, whilst safeguarding fundamental rights and the principle of non-refoulement. The changes aim to address key challenges in return procedures and reduce obstacles that Member States encounter when carrying out returns. The text notably aims to:

- accelerate and simplify border procedures;
- have clearer and faster procedures for issuing return decisions;
- streamline appeal procedures;
- introduce clearer rules on detention;
- introduce an obligation for Member States to establish national systems for return management that should communicate with a central system established by Frontex.

The European Commission also proposed an amendment to the Council Regulation (EC) 377/2004 on the creation of an immigration liaison officers (ILO) network. The proposed new Regulation aims to ensure better coordination and use of European assets deployed in Third Countries (around 500 ILOs are currently deployed in 105 Third Countries) to enable them to more effectively respond to EU priorities (combatting irregular migration and related cross-border criminality such as document fraud, smuggling of migrants and trafficking in human beings (THB); facilitating returns; contributing to Integrated Border Management; and supporting the management of legal migration, including international protection

and resettlement). The proposal's key innovation is the establishment of a formal governance mechanism ("Steering Board") to assist in coordinating the work of the ILO networks and which may issue ad-hoc tasking to networks of ILOs. Significantly for Frontex, the Liaison Officers deployed abroad by Frontex constitute ILOs in the meaning of the Regulation and can be included within the ILO networks. Moreover, Frontex would also be represented in the proposed ILO Steering Board.

Another important field of JHA policy development is related to the EU large scale IT systems supporting security and border and migration management. 2018 was marked by important steps forwards as the Regulations⁽⁴⁾ establishing the European Travel information and Authorisation System (ETIAS) were adopted, published in the Official Journal of the EU and entered into force on 9 October 2018. ETIAS is a completely new electronic system which will allow and keep track of visitors to the Schengen area from visa-exempt non-EU countries. It resembles the U.S Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA), which serves a similar purpose. The system will carry out preliminary checks on travellers to determine whether their travel and stay in the EU would constitute an irregular migration, security or public health risk. To do so, travellers would fill in an online application form providing certain advanced information (e.g. name, travel document, intended travel destination, answering certain background questions). The Regulation foresees the setting up of an ETIAS Central Unit within and managed by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency. Operating on a 24/7 basis, the ETIAS Central Unit will:

- Ensure that the data stored in the application files and the data recorded are correct and up to date;
- Verify the travel authorisation applications with regards to a traveller's identity in cases of a hit obtained during the automated process;
- Define, test, implement, evaluate and revise specific risk indicators of the ETIAS screening rules;
- Carry out regular audits on the management of applications and on the implementation of the ETIAS screening rules, particularly as regards their impact on fundamental rights, privacy rules and data protection.

In line with the interoperability strategy, ETIAS is designed to be interoperable with existing systems, and systems currently being developed, such as the Entry Exit System (EES). To the maximum extent possible and when technically feasible, the ETIAS will reuse the hardware and software components of the EES and its communication infrastructure. Interoperability will also be established with the other information systems to be consulted by ETIAS such as VIS, Europol data, SIS, Eurodac and ECRIS-TCN.

In order to achieve full interoperability across the EU large scale IT systems, a number of proposals were under negotiation in 2018, most notably the Interoperability Regulations (Interoperability between EU information systems (police and judicial cooperation, asylum and migration); interoperability between EU information systems :borders and visa). These texts aimed to ensure that end-users, particularly border guards, law enforcement officers, immigration officials and judicial authorities have fast, seamless, systematic and controlled access to needed information from large scale IT systems. In order to achieve the objectives, a number of components should be established:

- a European search portal,
- a shared biometric matching service,
- a common identity repository,
- a multiple-identity detector,
- a central repository for reporting and statistics (CRRS).

Another important development in this domain is the revision of the three Schengen Information System (SIS) Regulations which were agreed and entered into force in December 2018. These proposals cover the use of the system (a) for border management, (b) for police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal matters, and (c) for the return of illegally staying third country nationals. Importantly, these Regulations provide an access to SIS for (i) risk analysis (ii) ETIAS purposes, and (iii) for Frontex deployed teams, i.e. the staff involved in return-related tasks and Migration Management Support Teams members. A technical interface providing this access will now need to be established.

Finally, progress was also made in discussions on the revised Visa Information System but an agreement has yet to be reached on this file. The revision of the Eurodac Regulation is also still under negotiation.

⁴ European Parliament and Council Regulations 2018/1240 and 2018/1241

Interoperability and information systems

ETIAS

During 2018, the preparations for the implementation of the ETIAS Central Unit started. A decision to create an ETIAS and Interoperability Task Force was made and the first staff members were assigned to the taskforce. Members of the Task Force participated in meetings organised by the European Commission, and included representatives of eu-LISA, Europol and the member states in order to define the implementing and delegated acts foreseen by the regulation that are necessary to finalise the specifications for the tendering of the development of the ETIAS.

ACCESS to EES

The project for granting access to EBCG teams has been initiated in 2018 by the Agency.

In view of the establishment by 2020 of an Entry-Exit-System (EES) in the Schengen area to register the entry and exit data of third-country nationals in relation to short stays (maximum 90 days within any 180 days), Frontex Training Unit participated in meetings with eu-LISA and CEPOL to find a common approach on training development and delivery. The three Agencies agreed upon a common Training Needs Assessment exercise (which was kicked-off by means of a joint awareness raising webinar) and on a close cooperation and coordination in training development and delivery.

Frontex Research and Innovation Unit organised the Getting it right: harmonised implementation of Entry/Exit System (EES) workshop in June 2018, in Sofia, Bulgaria. The workshop was attended by over 60 representatives of the Member States, EU Agencies and EU-funded projects representatives and, in cooperation with eu-LISA, it co-organised the conference on the EU Borders – Getting Smarter through Technology in October 2018 in Tallinn. The conference was attended by over 200 participants representing the Member States, EU agencies and the private sector.

Additionally, RIU representatives contributed to various working groups on EES – including the Smart Borders Committee, eu-LISA's Advisory Group on EES and EES handbook and, upon request of the EU member states, it set up a workshop with industry and the member states on border control devices and systems for entry/exit related to registration equipment and systems which could be deployed at border crossing points to comply with the EES regulation. In this area, Frontex continues to facilitate the process and conduct tests, developing and proposing common solutions that could help Member States with requirements and Industry with specifications and create a reference list of equipment.

Eurosur/Copernicus input

JORA 2 development continued throughout 2018 with five modules being finalised and rolled out to end users (both internal and external) in the Member States. The business processes currently supported by JORA 2 cover ECRet (Readmission Reports, Flexible Operational Activities in Return –FOAR– identification missions & FOAR implementations) and RAU (Air Borders Risk Analysis Network –ABRAN– reporting & WB Info Exchange Reports) activities. Progress was also made on other modules not yet rolled out to end users.

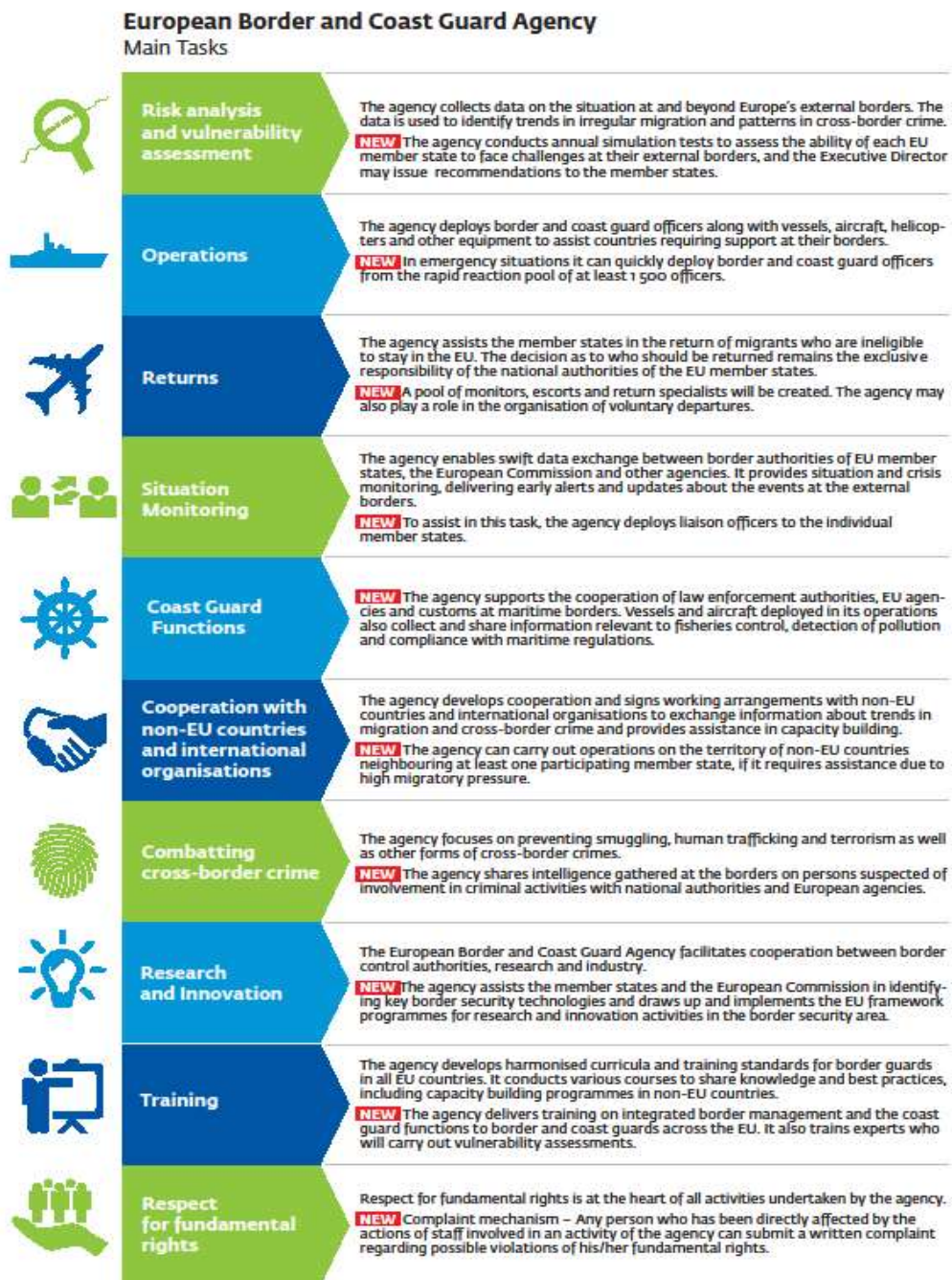
The GeoHUB version 1 development began in 2018. The aim of version 1 of this platform is to automatically retrieve earth observation data (satellite imagery and annotations) from EMSA and the European Union Satellite Centre (EU SatCen) and to process and catalogue this data for further dissemination in a more efficient way. In addition to that, the platform is also able to process full-motion video coming from manned and unmanned aerial platforms. Further improvement of this platform is planned to be carried out in 2019.

Frontex has been engaged in the development of the renewed EU Policy Cycle as stipulated in the Council conclusions 8654/17 on setting the EU's priorities for the fight against organised and serious international crime between 2018 and 2021. Consequently the agency was actively participating in the 4-year Multi-Annual Strategic Plans (MASPs) under the European Commission's guidance and annual Operational Action Plans (OAPs) launched in autumn 2017.

Frontex has participated in the drafting as well as the first year of implementation process in relation to 7 Crime Priority Areas identified within the framework of the EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT 2018-2021. These seven areas include: document fraud (cross-cutting area), facilitated illegal immigration, and trafficking in human beings, firearms, excise fraud, environmental and organised property crime. As part of Frontex commitment to the respective Operational Action Plans of these Crime Priority Areas, Frontex committed to lead three Joint Action Days (JADs) which have been undertaken during 2018. Frontex also supported other JADs coordinated by Europol or EU member states.

Moreover, Frontex's engagement in the prevention and detection of cross border crime contributed to the objectives of the EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT facilitating the fight against organised and serious international crime and thus enhancing the multiagency cooperation.

1.3. Mandate of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency



2. Strategic action areas

2.1. European integrated border management

Summary

On the basis of shared responsibilities within the European Border and Coast Guard, Frontex has continued to support and coordinate the implementation of the European integrated border management (IBM) through various operational activities during the course of the year. By far the largest operational activities were the 12 joint operations at the external land, air and sea borders while the main operational focus for Frontex in 2018 was on the Central, Eastern and Western Mediterranean areas which experienced the most significant migratory pressure.

In 2018, Frontex significantly enhanced the border control activities of the EU Member States and Schengen associated countries by providing technical and operational support totalling over 465,236 working days and 52,254 asset days.

The number of working days committed to operational activities decreased by almost 22% compared to 2017 (from 337,943 in 2017 to 263,833 days in 2018), supported by coordinating staff from the host countries who contributed additional 55,787 working days to the activities (increase of 14% compared to 2017). To add to this, the number of heavy equipment crew members deployed increased by more than 21% (3713 in 2017 and 4497 in 2018) performing 12% fewer working days in the operational areas compared to last year (165,136 in 2017 and 145,616 in 2018).

In 2018, Member States/Schengen associated countries (SACs) contributed to 10,960 asset days of heavy technical equipment. The number of patrolling hours performed by aerial and maritime means for surveillance purposes have amounted to 69,130, which increased almost by 6% as compared to 65,424 in 2017. In terms of land means (patrol cars, thermo-vision vans and light equipment such as surveillance cameras, detectors and cameras) contributed to 41,294 asset-days. In addition, a great number of Frontex own technical resources for border control were deployed to JOs including also TCs such as different document inspection devices (handheld magnifier, portable hand-held/on-body document inspection system, portable desktop or mobile document inspection system), CO2 probes, heart beat detectors and different equipment for border surveillance (night vision and binoculars).

The budget dedicated to the activities of the Operational Response Division in 2018 was 174 761 622 EUR (including 49 404 080 EUR for the activities of ECRet) this represents almost 55 % of the overall budget of the Agency for 2018 (320 198 000 EUR) and is almost 38% higher compared to the budget for operations in 2017. Frontex developed also a number of new tools for the management of resources and a more precise and extensive reporting of deployment information.

Thus, 2018 was a year of significant change, challenges and readjustment in the implementation of activities. At the same time Frontex continued to assist Member States and Schengen associated countries (MSs/SACs) in developing their own capacity and effectiveness in the area of border control through the exchange of good practices, expanding its network of contacts both in the MS/SACs and third countries, as well as learning by example.

In the framework of Frontex JOs in 2018, the operational activities resulted in the detection of 1,187 facilitators and human smugglers and a wide variety of other types of cross-border crimes, illegal goods and substances such as: 88,656 litres of alcohol, 528 pieces of ammunition, 117 kilograms of cocaine, more than 154 tons of hashish and marijuana, nearly one ton of heroin (937 kilos) and more than 3,130 tons of other types of drugs. Furthermore, 397 stolen cars were detected and 561 cases were reported involving the detection of parts and pieces of stolen cars. Enhancing the operational effectiveness, three EMPACT operations (JADs) were successfully implemented by Frontex as a part of joint operations.

Within the joint operations, Frontex has ensured the running of the EURTF platform for European Migration Management Teams as well as it has supported the Member States in the management of the flows of disembarked migrants, including proper referral mechanisms, by enabling reliable identification and registration of persons as well as identification of persons in need for international protection. Moreover, referral to law enforcement authorities in cases of security threat (in particular concerning suspected terrorists) or other criminal activities (and collection of personal data to be shared for the purpose of criminal investigation) has been implemented. Ensuring full compliance with fundamental rights has been an integral part of the activities.

Frontex maritime surveillance operations have significantly increased the search and rescue capacities of Member States. The vessels in maritime operations have helped rescuing more than 37,000 migrants during their patrolling activities. Cooperating collectively with all relevant MS authorities in the planning of operations and in particular during their implementation, Frontex operations have provided concrete platform for inter-agency cooperation between the national authorities and with Frontex, as well as with other EU Agencies. The operational coast guard and law enforcement/cross-

border crime activities implemented as a part of joint operations brought additional European and national authorities and organisations together cooperating under the same operational concept. Operational reporting during the activities provided significant data for risk analysis and for the management of EUROSUR situational picture.

Joint operations also provided a practical framework for implementing Frontex working arrangements with third country partners. Third country observers deployed to Frontex Joint Operations enabled sharing best European practices and skills to third country officers in more than 32 border crossing points and border control unit thus improving the practical cooperation between the competent authorities involved in controlling of irregular migration flows and tackling other cross-border crime. Within different operations 42 third country officers were deployed to MS enabling them to familiarise themselves with European operational methods. Intense use of the platform to exchange information between Focal Points and Police Customs Cooperation Centres is to be noted which ultimately contributed to the Member States and EU agencies fight of cross border crime and terrorism.

Highlights: Joint Operations 2018

Supporting Western Balkans air borders (JO Coordination Points Air 2018)

In August 2017, Serbia decided to abolish visas for Iranians. Due to an increase of Iranian nationals in possession of forged/counterfeit documents identified arriving at EU airports and land border BCPs via Serbia, Frontex decided to enhance its presence at the Belgrade airport and to provide support and expertise to the Serbian authorities with additional deployments of border guard experts as observers. In total 103 incidents were reported and several unlawful departures toward EU destinations were prevented by the Serbian authorities. Finally in October 2018, the Serbian government has cancelled visa-free entry for Iranian passport holders, slightly over a year later after abolishing the visa regime.

UEFA Championship League Final (JO Coordination Points Air 2018)

In April 2018, Frontex received a formal request from the Ukrainian Authorities to support the local Border Guards in border checks on the occasion of the UEFA Championship League Final in May 2018 at the Kiev Olimpiyskiy Stadium. Two Spanish Team Members were deployed at Kiev – Boryspil Airport as EU Advisers.

For the first time in 2018, seconded Team Members were deployed in different TC airports. Their deployment resulted in an increased mutual understanding of different aspects of border control, enhanced operational cooperation during the deployment of Frontex experts as Second Line Officers and Advanced Level Document Experts.

Drug smuggling – sailing vessel EL CANONERO (JO Themis 2018)

On 29 November 2018, following a drugs investigation led by Europol, the French authorities and Italian Guardia di Finanza (GdF), ICC Rome received a request to locate and monitor a sailing vessel suspected of smuggling drugs. On the same day, based on the coordinates provided by Frontex to ICC Rome, the FASS FWA ‘Tasty’ detected the mentioned sailing vessel. The target was intercepted by the GdF maritime assets, 3 smugglers (2 ESP and 1 COL) were arrested and more than 6.3 tons of hashish worth approximately EUR 50 million were seized.

Drug smuggling – cargo vessel NOKA (JO Poseidon 2018)

On 4–5 December 2018, the suspected commercial vessel was spotted by UAV Heron deployed within JO Poseidon 2018 (RIU Pilot Project) and monitored (shadowed) at the later stage by MAS (Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance) FWA. The HCG Off-shore Patrol Vessels deployed in the area, intercepted the suspected container vessel and escorted it to the Crete Island for a further thorough investigation. After a few days of intensive searches on the container vessel, the following drugs were discovered: 6.05 tons of hashish and 3,127,360 pills of CAPTAGON which is also known as ‘the drug of the jihadists’, worth approximately EUR 100 million. In addition, 11 crew members were arrested.

The concept of the IBM has been also practically complemented by the contribution of Frontex to EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT. Aside from the engagement in Operational Actions, the Agency got involved in the Joint Action Days initiatives developed by the Council under the EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT. Frontex led three Joint Action Days (JADs) and supported several others that were led either by Europol or MS under the Cycle/EMPACT Priorities. Three JADs Danube 3’, ‘Mobile’ and ‘Olympus’ were organised with the co-leadership of the MS and Europol (in case of JAD ‘Mobile’). Moreover, Frontex provided support to JAD ‘Western Balkans, Large Scale JAD, JADs on THB. In search of synergies with other stakeholders, Frontex took advantage of its coordinated land and joint operations, namely Joint Operation Focal Points 2018 Land, Joint Operation Flexible Operational Activities 2018 Land on Border Checks, Joint Operation Flexible

Operational Activities 2018 Land on Border Surveillance and Joint Operation Coordination Points 2018 Land, Joint Operation Pegasus and embraced several additional elements peculiar only to JADs, entailing partners from police, border guard and customs authorities to jointly tackle the cross-border crime. During the above activities customs-police collaboration was enhanced also via the participation of CELBET experts and the already existing cooperation with Europol and INTERPOL was further increased. JADs coordinated by Frontex resulted in the establishment of the Coordination Centre allowing the MS and TC as well as Europol to exchange information and foster the operational cooperation by deploying Frontex Document Fraud Task Force officers.

The agency progressed regarding law enforcement services for MS, EU agencies and entities by developing robust modules for operationalising working arrangements and providing fully-fledged services to border guard, police and customs field cooperation with the aim to counteract the variety of cross-border crime and terrorism threats according to the EBCG mandate. Additionally, in 2018 the agency provided enhanced support to the MS in the frame of operational cooperation with agencies responsible for investigation and prosecution, making the best use of the Frontex multipurpose operations and other related actions to support their activities.

The ISA-CBC (Investigation Support Activities for Cross-Border Crime) Pilot Project successfully initiated in 2018 is combining the analytical and surveillance tools offered already by the agency with the equipment provision and financial support to MS when targeting concrete cases of illegal trafficking via EU external borders. This pilot project constitutes a step for the Agency to become a fully-fledged service provider for all MS in terms of tackling cross-border crime in the maritime, land and air-border domains – in line with the requests from the MS services having the competence in cross-border prevention and detection.

Highlights: Law Enforcement Activities 2018

Cooperation with EU Customs services

With respect to counteracting cross-border crime, in accordance with the EU IBM and in light of the Frontex mandate, the agency has increased the operational interaction with EU customs services. The customs operational cooperation development is key to a successful and modern protection of the borders and at the same time to preventing and detecting as well as investigating cross-border crimes. In 2018, Frontex established itself as a reliable partner for the EU customs services and bodies and increased the strategic and operational collaboration in the frame of or with CCWP, Customs Eastern and South-eastern Land Border Expert Team (CELBET 2), within (Joint Police Customs Operation) (JPCO)/Joint Customs Operations (JCOs)/Joint Investigation Activities (JIAs), Frontex Joint Operations and other tools. Contributing and supporting initiatives which have the customs enforcement component included, such as Police Customs Cooperation Centres (PCCC), EU Border Assistance Mission (EUBAM) to Moldova and Ukraine, South Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SEESAC) and others.

Lastly, the agency established a new Centre of Excellence for Combatting Document Fraud (CED) with the aim of reinforcing the multipurpose character of Frontex joint operations, enhancing the involvement of the agency in field activities undertaken against document and related identity frauds.

Highlights: Centre of Excellence for Combatting Document Fraud Activities 2018

Frontex Document Alert (FDA)

In the course of 2018 Frontex streamlined the way to collect and disseminate information on document fraud cases detected in its operational activities. The agency designed three simple Document Alert Templates for the EBCGT reporting team members (a Document Fraud Alert, a Transportation Means Alert and a Modus Operandi Alert template). The new Frontex Document Alert system also simplifies the reported fraud cases for the use of different law enforcement agencies in the Member States. Frontex established a formal process for the reporting, validation and dissemination of those Document Alerts by using the technical expertise of specialists and advanced level document experts pooled in its Centre of Excellence for Combatting Document Fraud (CED). Contextually, a new service, the **Frontex Document Alert Helpdesk**, is available for all deployed EBCGT members who can receive support on document fraud cases directly to the **Frontex Document Fraud Task Force** available during working hours (09.00 – 17.00).

In 2018, there was a high level of expectations and developments in the field of return. With an increasing number of cases in the MS/SAC, Frontex increased both its capacity as well as the catalogue of supporting activities in order to assist the MS/SAC in effectively implementing returns.

As one of the last parts of the migration management chain, returns had been one of the areas where cooperation between national, European and non-European stakeholders was most crucial. The agency facilitated this through the focus on supporting ICT developments that provide common frameworks for current and future cooperation, presenting

and fine-tuning the model of the Return Case Management System (model-RECAMAS), functioning as a guideline for MS to align national case management systems. Through cooperation with internal and external stakeholders (such as EU-funded projects, Third Countries) over 1,500 cases were reviewed to support identification and documentation of returnees, leading to over 900 confirmed identifications and the issuance of over 460 travel documents.

Member States' capacities to implement effective returns continued to be supported by Frontex. This was achieved by expanding the pilot project on returns by scheduled flights which allowed Member States to successfully return third country nationals by making use of the special agreements Frontex has concluded with different airlines. In addition, the agency continued to organise and coordinate return operations by charter flights including collecting return operations requiring close cooperation with third countries.

Frontex continued to enhance its role in promoting standards and developing guidelines for forced return operations which seek to harmonise procedures during the operations while ensuring full respect of fundamental rights.

These achievements contribute to the strengthening of the European integrated border management concept, with returns as one of its key domains.

| Highlights: Return Operations 2018 | |
|---|--|
| Return Case Management System | |
| Frontex presented its model Return Case Management System (model-RECAMAS) which serves as a guideline to align functionalities of national systems. | |

Regarding the capacity development dimension, in parallel with the development and adoption of the technical and operational IBM strategy, the agency's training arm worked together with MS and SAC authorities to translate the requirements from the EBCG Regulation on the European Integrated Border Management into national strategies, an obligation they must comply with within six months from the adoption of the technical and operational IBM strategy. To this end, Frontex delivered four courses to MS and SAC that benefitted 98 experts. The ultimate goal of this course was to ensure that enough appropriately trained experts are available and capable to support their national authorities in drafting national IBM strategies and action plans in line with EU standards. One awareness session on EU IBM was also delivered to 22 third countries representatives from the Eastern Partnership Countries and Western Balkans.

Two courses for Schengen evaluators were delivered in 2018 to prepare 95 national experts in conducting Schengen evaluation missions, while another two iterations of the Frontex course on Customs and Border Guard cooperation at the EU external land border crossing points were held, a total of 44 officials were trained to enhance cooperation at border crossing points.

Frontex Research and Innovation Unit provided support and technical assistance to the Western Balkans in the context of the IPA II Programme 'Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey', under Phase I, Intervention 2 'Enhancing the capacity and tools in IPA II beneficiary countries to perform the registration of mixed migration flows in a harmonised manner, observing future interoperability with EU/Schengen MS systems and practices, and in full respect of fundamental rights'.

The activities and the results achieved were focused on the development of a Roadmap for improving the Identification and Registration process of mixed migration flows in the beneficiary countries. As a continuation of implementing the Regional Action Plan for the Western Balkan region and the National Action Plans, key priority areas have been identified: the need to assess and upgrade the IT and communication national infrastructures for the management of mixed migration flows and the need to establish national integrated border management information systems connecting all relevant authorities in the respective countries. The assessment will be provided through the delivery of a Feasibility Study that was launched in December 2018 and will be concluded in the six beneficiary countries by June 2019. The results, conclusions and recommendations of the Feasibility Study will further allow the development of activities foreseen for Phase II of IPA II project.

To contribute to a uniform and high level of control of the EU external borders, the agency works together with MS/SAC on the development of minimum technical and operational requirements for maritime, terrestrial and aerial technical equipment to be purchased by MS via ISF (Internal Security Fund). In 2018, the Working Group established for this purpose focused on maritime assets. The ISF aims at supporting Member States to achieve a uniform and high level of control of the European Union (EU) external borders. In 2018, the European Commission (EC) has secured additional EUR 128.7 million for the purchase of technical equipment via the ISF Border and Visa instrument/Specific Actions (SA). Such approach is in line with the agency's operations aimed to contribute to the effective implementation of main components of the Integrated Border Management i.e. operational activities at air, land and sea borders, and solidarity and quality control mechanisms.

2.2. European cooperation on coast guard functions

Summary

Interagency cooperation has been strengthened following the Annual Strategical Plan 2018 of the Tripartite Working Arrangement (TWA) between the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA), the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) on Coast Guard functions, including the successful work conducted within the Frontex chaired Technical Subcommittee on capacity sharing and legal issues.

As the first Chair of the TWA Steering Committee, EFCA hosted the Annual European Coast Guard event that was held in Isla de la Toja, Pontevedra, Spain on 11 and 12 April 2018. The aim of the event was to serve as the main forum for discussions on subject matter, to receive feedback from the stakeholders and to identify possible activities for the future cooperation among the Agencies to support national authorities in carrying out coast guard functions.

Frontex actively participated and contributed with its expertise to several coast guard functions forums at the European (e.g. BSRBCC, ECGFF, and MEDCGFF) and international (NACGF, CGGS) levels and in other regional initiatives related to the coast guard functions. Frontex also internally coordinated the implementation of the coast guard functions within the agency's activities.

Frontex took part together with EFCA, EMSA and Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden in Operation 'Baltic Tracking 2018' (17–30 September 2018). The aim was the establishment of a common 'Maritime Multirisk Awareness' in the frame of BSRBCC with the focus on implementation of the CGFs as border control, fisheries control, pollution control at sea, response to oil spills, SAR. The outcomes of Operation 'Baltic Tracking 2018' were as follows:

| TE available | Total no. of TE (readiness state and on duty) | Daily average TE used | Dedicated TE for SAR operations | Total no. of dedicated TE for SAR operations | Daily average no. of TE used for SAR |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Cars: | 246 | 18 | Cars: | 4 | 0 |
| Vessels: | 694 | 50 | Vessels: | 1,538 | 110 |
| Aircrafts: | 98 | 7 | Aircrafts: | 163 | 12 |
| Other: | 229 | 16 | Other: | 6 | 0 |
| Total units available: | 1,267 | 91 | Total SAR units available: | 1,711 | 122 |

| Activity: | Border | Fishing | Pollution | Customs | Other | SAR |
|---------------------|--------|---------|-----------|---------|-------|-----|
| No of Inspections | 312 | 125 | 8 | 20 | 83 | 2 |
| Measures | 10 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 15 | |
| % Measures of Insp. | 3% | 2% | 38% | 15% | 18% | 0% |

Frontex organised and implemented two SAR workshops within JO Poseidon in Samos (24 – 25 September 2018) and Lesbos (23–24 October 2018). The aim was to enhance coordination and cooperation among all operational actors involved in SAR operations, as well as to boost capacity in order to save lives at sea and improve the humanitarian response to those rescued at sea. The practical exercise was based on a scenario, as realistic as possible, inspired by the current challenges faced by the crews in each of the Islands. A total of 19 naval/aerial assets and 100 crew members from HCG staff/participating MSs took part in both events.

In 2018, as a pilot project, Seconded Team Members (STMs) with the European Coast Guard Functions Officer (ECGFO) profile were deployed in JO Poseidon (ICC Piraeus), JO Themis (ICC Rome) and JO Indalo (ICC Madrid). Additionally, one STM has been redeployed for a short period on board of EFCA OPV during the operation Baltic Tracking.

Highlights: Coast Guard activities 2018

Collaboration within the framework of BSRBCC was continued and enhanced with the participation of more Frontex units (FDU, FCS, RAU) within the framework of the Operation Baltic Tracking 2018. For a second year in a row 2 SAR Workshops were successfully implemented within the framework of JO Poseidon. For the first time, 1 ECGFO officer was deployed for three months in each of the main maritime Frontex JO (Indalo, Themis and Poseidon).

Regarding the capacity development dimension, a new course for European Coast Guard Functions Officers (ECGFO) was successfully launched in Pratica di Mare, Italy, in April 2018. The aim of the course was to establish common training standards of Member States Border and Coast Guard services and to enhance the level of competence of the learners, thereby strengthening the opportunities for operational cooperation during Frontex Joint Maritime Operations.

Among the training products related to the preparation for deployment in Joint Maritime Operations, to enhance cooperation skills, further develop competences related to maritime border surveillance activities, employ advanced maritime/aeronautical communication skills and prepare participants for their future deployment in Frontex Joint Maritime Operations, Frontex training Unit delivered the following courses:

- Border Surveillance Officers – Maritime Operations (three iterations in 2018, totalling 61 officers trained)
- European Coast Guard Function Officers (four iterations, totalling 46 officers trained)

As part of the border package adopted by the European Parliament and the Council, the mandates of Frontex, European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and European Maritime Safety Agency's (EMSA) were amended by introducing in their regulation a request for them to work together with the aim to provide more efficient and cost-effective support to the MS authorities carrying out coast guard functions. Frontex Air Crew Preparation for Joint Operations course is a good example of cooperation among the three Agencies in the area of capacity building, embedding both the EFCA and EMSA contributions related to fisheries and environmental pollution control operational procedures. In the course of 2018, three courses were delivered to air crews, totalling 41 crew members trained.

A three-day intensive workshop on mobile boarding for representatives from authorities of 18 Member States performing coast guard functions was held in Lübeck (Germany) under the German chairmanship of the European Coast Guard Functions Forum (ECGFF). The workshop was supported by the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), with the participation of the European Fisheries and Control Agency (EFCA) and the European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA). The purpose of the workshop was to:

- discuss common border protection standards based on the Frontex 'Best Practices & Guidelines'; clarify training needs and requirements for a possible common training concept on boarding based on a pre-delivered questionnaire;
- identify experts for possible training development;
- further reflect on common standards.

Frontex Training Unit played an active role within Frontex 2018 Annual Coast Guard Conference: Search & Rescue, Maritime Surveillance, supporting the identification of training needs expressed by the coast guard community. The Maritime Domain was also at the core of Frontex Annual Training Conference 2018, where experts from different areas had the opportunity to share experience and best practices.

Frontex Training Unit contributed to the development of the Coast Guard Sectoral Qualifications Framework in the context of the EFCGA-Net project, ensuring comparability and compatibility with the specific qualification framework (SQF) for border guarding. Representing Frontex in the governing and advisory boards of the project, providing advice on the development of a quality assurance system for the coast guard SQF and its further implementation – including the development of learning outcome-based training courses in areas of common interest.

Under the auspices of the EU Austrian Presidency, the European Defence Agency (EDA) and Frontex hosted a kick-off event on 12 October in Warsaw for a training programme aiming to enhance the preparation of law enforcement and naval personnel to operate together for an effective border security in the maritime domain and provide efficacious response to threats and challenges at sea.

Frontex Research and Innovation Unit set up the working group for the development of minimum technical requirements for maritime equipment. Composed of experts from Frontex and MS, the working group met four times and conducted two study visits to the Greek island of Lesvos and to Helsinki. The development of a technical report on the minimum technical and operational requirements for maritime equipment was finalised in the course of 2018 and its publication (Limited) is foreseen for Q2 2019.

A pilot activity assessing the existing Maritime Analysis Tools – maritime 'big data' (e.g. maritime reporting systems data, information on ship ownership/management, historical movements of vessels and relevant open sources information), and the capacity to build on them to produce information of interest for border/coast guard and law enforcement authorities was carried out, obtaining excellent results.

In the context of interagency cooperation and sharing of capacities, Frontex framework contract for Aerial Surveillance Services supported the European Fisheries Control Agency's (EFCA's) activities in the central Mediterranean.

The execution of the coast guard functions was as well supported by Frontex Situation Centre (FSC) with the provision

of Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance (MAS) service in the Central Mediterranean Sea, Black Sea, Aegean Sea, and Atlantic Ocean (area south of Portugal). The sightings performed by MAS aircraft were shared with Member States partners, which included national authorities from Italy and Malta, and European partners, which included EUNAVFOR MED and EFCA. The sightings resulted in operational follow-up activities of the Member States and the European partners. Eighty-one cases of search and rescue and law enforcement activities following the detections were reported. These led to a rescue/interception of 4924 migrants at sea.

In the frame of implementation of the tri-partite working arrangement, related to coast guard functions activities during 2018 the highlights of the achievements are depicted in the tables below.

| Objectives 2018 | Lead organisation / Outcomes |
|--|--|
| Strategic / Horizontal | |
| Develop a concept and format for an annual European Coast Guard event, to be tested for the first time in Vigo (Spain) to involve national authorities performing coast guard functions and other EU and international partners for consultation and feedback on Agencies' cooperation activities. | The first Annual European Coast Guard Event was held in La Toja, Pontevedra, Spain, on the 11 and 12 April 2018. A total of 118 participants attended the event from 22 Member States and Norway and the European institutions. It was the first event after the signature of the Tripartite Working Arrangement, having the communities of the three agencies together for consultation and feed-back on the cooperation. The event was structured into an opening session, a technical session and a wrap up and closure session. The technical session covered in succession the five cooperation areas defined by the co-legislator and was the main forum for consultation and feed-back from national authorities. Referring to conclusions of the 1st annual event, the 2nd annual European Coast Guard event organised by Frontex in cooperation with EFCA and EMSA was focused on CG topics discussed in the format of workshops representing EU Agencies and Member States. This event was held in Poland (Świnoujście) from 15 to 17 April 2019. |
| Set up the three technical subcommittees to support the implementation of the Annual Strategic Plan. | The three technical subcommittees have been set-up and chaired by EMSA (Area 1 & 2), EFCA (Area 3 & 4) and Frontex (Area 5). |
| Identification of new areas of mutual interest for interagency cooperation including new or amendment of existing Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)/ Service Level Agreements (SLAs). | There are bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and Service Level Agreements (SLAs) signed between the agencies covering different subjects, such as information sharing or procurement procedures. SLA EMSA/Frontex was amended to include an automatic renewal clause. MoU signed between Frontex and EFCA for an inter-institutional framework contract for Aerial Surveillance Services. |
| Increase coordination of the Agencies' communication activities related to the implementation of the interagency cooperation on coast guard functions. | Communication activities were coordinated through an agreed communication plan. |

| Area 1 Information sharing | |
|--|---|
| To further develop data sharing framework, and to investigate possibilities to increase interoperability between information systems. | The three agencies' systems are fully interfaced and exchanging and sharing all maritime information that has been identified of interest for the different coast guard activities. The exchange of information has been reflected in an information matrix to detail the source and any restriction on access rights to be applied to the final users. |
| Identification of information gaps and possible new information products as well as development and launching of new services (see also risk analysis area). | A request from Frontex to provide additional vessel positioning data for the eastern part of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean was evaluated and will be contracted and implemented in 2019 by EMSA to share the data among agencies. |
| Conduct organisational and technical work to integrate positions of assets (active during joint operations) in a maritime picture. | The agencies agree that rather than sharing the positions of assets that could be in some cases conflicting with security considerations, the maritime picture could include the areas of operations per agency (e.g.: stand by area of EMSA's pollution response vessels, area of fisheries control campaigns, Frontex joint operations or pre-frontier surveillance). |
| Continue to validate the VDS (vessel detection system) by organising joint validation campaigns. | Five operational exercises were organised involving representatives of the three agencies. |

| Area 2 Surveillance and communication services | |
|--|---|
| Integration of Remotely-Piloted Aircraft System (RPAS) data into a maritime picture (IMS, Eurosur, Fusion Services). | The RPAS data streams were integrated with other data layers of the IMS system through a specific web interface available for real time command and control of the RPAS operation and access to the information from the aircraft sensors overlaid on other maritime information. |
| Roll-out of Frontex Fixed-Wing Aircraft (FWA) services and EMSA RPAS services for multipurpose operations and evaluation of first results, paving the way for a new concept of common surveillance services by joint deployment of airborne (RPAS and FWAs) and seaborne means and appropriate command and control structures (also relevant for Area 5). | New procurement in 2018 allowed to increase the available portfolio of RPAS for the three agencies with in particular a MALE aircraft, new VTOL capabilities and smaller quadricopters, to be operated also from vessels. EMSA provided mid-size fixed wing RPAS services over Portuguese waters to FRONTEX with a payload configuration composed of optical and infrared cameras, a maritime radar, AIS and distress signal receiver. This aircraft is equipped with satellite communications which allow beyond radio line sight operations. |

| Area 3 Capacity building | |
|--|---|
| Assist the European Commission in the preparation of the Practical Handbook of European Cooperation on Coast Guard Functions. | In March 2018, the European Commission prepared a concept note establishing the general scope of the handbook, recommending that the handbook should be developed in close cooperation with national competent authorities and requesting that the agencies coordinate the drafting process by setting up a cross-sectoral framework. The handbook should cover the five cooperation areas and focus on cross-sector cooperation. During the annual European Coast Guard Event, in April 2018, a dedicated session was held on the handbook and general feedback was provided by the national authorities. The agencies started the drafting process by requesting their governing boards to nominate experts in the five cooperation areas. The nomination process was concluded at the end of November 2018 and a kick-off meeting was planned for January 2019. A discussion document was prepared for the kick-off meeting, proposing specific content and a structure of the handbook. |
| Collect training needs from Member States national authorities and Agencies staff and identification and preparation of joint training modules among Agencies. | During 2018, the three agencies consulted their respective communities (EMSA: Consultative Network on Technical Assistance – CNTA, Frontex: Annual Training Conference, EFCA: Steering Group on Training and Exchange of Experience – SGTEE) and raised awareness on the coast guard cooperation and the importance of cross-sectoral training. During 2018, joint cross-sector training modules were developed |

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| | <p>and implemented, including tailored maritime safety and fisheries control modules for the EMSA and EFCA Communities; air crew preparation for joint operations and pre-deployment briefings for multipurpose operations for the Frontex Community.</p> <p>During the Annual Coast Guard Event held in April 2018, two possible training topics were identified by the national authorities. These included search and rescue for MRCC operators and maritime surveillance for surveillance operators. The agencies are currently analysing how existing training modules could be combined to cover the three communities. The agencies are currently working on additional channels to collect cross-sector training needs from national authorities.</p> |
| Identifying opportunities and preparation of joint capacity building projects for non-EU Partner Countries, taking into account existing projects. | <p>The three agencies are currently implementing capacity building sessions or projects independently with non-EU Countries. As the first step, the three agencies did an inventory and mapping of these current activities and specifically for 2019 set up a map by quarter and region (EU enlargement countries, Black Sea and Caspian Sea, Middle East and North Africa and West Africa) to specifically analyse where synergies could be developed. The agencies consider that the development of fully joint capacity building projects could be challenging due to constraints within the scope and terms of reference of existing projects and also due to possible different communities within the non-EU partner countries that are targeted by the current projects. The agencies consider therefore that, as the first step, back to back training and capacity building events could be organised by the three agencies. If the feedback and experience is positive, the cooperation could be deepened to greater levels of integration at a later stage.</p> |
| Assess the need and feasibility of a common training event on coast guard Functions. | <p>Currently, the three agencies organise different training events for their own communities. During the Annual Coast Guard Event, the agencies requested input from national authorities on possible cross-sectoral training needs. Also, the agencies raised awareness on the European cooperation on coast guard functions. Therefore, the agencies considered it premature at that stage to develop a common training event on coast guard functions.</p> |

| Area 4 Risk analysis | |
|---|---|
| Developing an understanding of the type of data, methodology and analytical output that each agency is producing and which of these analytical products have interest for the other agencies and can be shared with them. | <p>The three agencies developed their own risk analysis frameworks within their mandate to support national authorities performing coast guard functions (e.g. providing risk assessment tools, risk assessment analysis and products and/or abnormal behaviour monitoring).</p> <p>In order to develop a common understanding, the three agencies exchanged information about the types of data, methodologies (steps, levels and objectives of risk assessment) as well as analytical products that are currently used by each agency. Also a common terminology of risk analysis in a form of a glossary is being developed.</p> |
| Determine which type of analytical products can be jointly developed by the three agencies, which can lead to a more comprehensive analysis of operational challenges and emerging risks in the maritime domain. | <p>The different mandates of the agencies resulted in the development of different analytical products. The agencies discussed therefore possible levels of integration in respective analytical products, considering advantages and disadvantages of each level. The adequate spatial and temporal dimensions would be important to consider. The levels of planning between strategic planning vs tactical day-to-day monitoring were also considered. The identification of complementarities that could be relevant for each agency (data poor situations, low risks with high impacts) was also considered.</p> |
| Test mechanisms on periodical exchange of data related to risks and threats at maritime domain. | <p>The technical subcommittee plans to identify types of information (and/or data) to be potentially exchanged. Once the data and information and products are identified, the</p> |

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|---|--|
| | mechanism can be considered and proposed. |
| Develop a first joint risk assessment of emerging risks in the Mediterranean area to contribute to the preparation and development of capacity sharing. | The main objective of this priority is to inform multipurpose operations of risks and threats in the Mediterranean area. This could be structured by season and geographical area. The development of joint risk assessment products was considered by the three agencies as challenging due to the agencies' different risk assessment frameworks. The agencies started therefore to map currently available information of risks and threats in the Mediterranean. This information has fundamental different characteristics, in some cases it includes observations of real past events, and in other cases it includes statistical likelihood (possible events). The different nature of the data and information is not a problem as such, but the end product of overlaying different risk information of different nature should be clear when using the information to assist decisions making. The agencies are currently analysing the different possibilities of a joint risk assessment, but the central question is on how the Member States' needs could be addressed. The development of a joint risk assessment products shall be carried out only if it brings a benefit to the Member States. |

| Area 5 Capacity sharing | |
|---|--|
| Introduction of the concept of multipurpose missions during planning and implementation of operations in the areas of mutual concern keeping a geographical balance. Planning shall be shared between the agencies, including periods and type of operational means to be used. | The concept draft of the European Multipurpose Maritime Activities (EMMA), with the integration in operational modules of operations, is under development. The Interagency concept will be further discussed with Member States during the 2nd Annual European Coast Guard Event. |
| Continue involving national authorities to steer the sharing of capacities process for multipurpose operations, look for synergies in the agencies' operations and provide an analysis of the results. | A mapping of the existing authorities performing coast guard functions has been conducted. The mapping is based on the authorities participating at the agencies' level but it also relies on European and international forums related to coast guard functions (BSRBCC, ECGFF, NACGFF, MCGFF, and CGGS). The document is under finalisation. |
| Establishment of cooperation between Agencies Operational Centres for exchange of information in real time and provision of responses to threats in the areas of operation (also relevant for Area 1). | The mapping of Agencies Operational Centres for exchange of information in real time has been conducted. The document is under finalisation. |
| Analyse the legal aspects that may impact the implementation of multipurpose operations in European cooperation on coast guard functions. | Legal issues reflecting the "flag state" enforcement powers in the international waters have been explored, including the EU flag, also in relation to leasing/chartering of the agencies' equipment. |
| Sharing information about existing and planned sea and air surveillance possibilities (agencies, commercial procurement, governmental assets) and preparation of a database accessible to the agencies. | A memorandum of understanding has been signed between Frontex and EFCA on new Frontex Aerial Surveillance Services (FASS). Cooperation with EFCA in the use of Frontex's RPAS pilot was established. Frontex and EFCA have established operational contacts and exchange information on periodical basis in connection with EFCA OPV operational activity. |

2.3. Operational response

Summary

In 2018, Frontex further enhanced the operational response at the external borders of the EU by allocating additional budget to operational activities and focused on the following activities.

Enhanced border security in land border:

- supporting the national authorities in disclosing cases of smuggling of migrants, trafficking in human beings and other cross-border crime;
- active support in detecting irregular migrants at the border crossing points (BCPs), false documents, stolen vehicles as well as preventing cross-border criminal activities at 47 focal points;
- new focal point established in Raigardas (Lithuanian–Belarusian border);
- establishment of five new coordination points at land borders in third countries, including a new participating third country - Georgia;
- establishment of a new Local Coordination Centre (LCC) and activation of operational area at Greek–Albanian border – fully fledged activities including intelligence gathering;
- new monitoring area – Moravita at Romanian–Serbian border;
- initial steps taken for planning of fully fledged operational activities, including the intelligence gathering in Albania and FYROM, following the entry into force of Status Agreements;
- increased deployments during FIFA 2018 World Cup and Joint Action Days;
- new deployments profile – ‘Cross border crime detection officer’.

Enhanced operational cooperation in land border:

- during REX 2018 additional resources were deployed, reinforcing/covering the gaps at certain operational areas
- enhanced cooperation with UNHCR in Bulgaria;
- focal points and coordination points used efficiently as a platform for hosting other operational activities: EMPACT-JADs (JAD Danube III and JAD Mobile) and Focal Points - Police Customs Cooperation Centres information exchange;
- cooperation with Europol, INTERPOL, CELBET, the European network of national contact points for the fight against cross-border vehicle crime (CARPOL) and several national customs authorities during the JADs.

Establishment and exchange of best practices in land border:

- staff exchange programme continues to be regular part of the operation, including the deployment of third country officers;
- workshops and ad-hoc trainings for local staff on detection of falsified documents and stolen vehicles delivered by team members and seconded team members.

Budgetary breakdown of Operational Response Division (ORD) appropriations for 2018:

- ORD Field Deployments – EUR 116,563,943 (technical and human resources deployment cost);
- ORD Divisional Support – EUR 8,794,599 (costs of participants of Frontex organised meetings, meeting logistics, missions (of Frontex staff and STM) and other);
- return activities – EUR 49,403,080 (return and pre-return activities which are further described at 2.4 below);
- total budgetary envelope – EUR 174,761,622.

The activity-based utilisation of ORD appropriations for 2018:

- Focal Points Concept JOU-1 (EUR 5,062,215)
- Multipurpose Maritime Activities Concept JOU-2 (EUR 97,859,347)
- Flexible Operational Activities Concept JOU-3 (EUR 13,341,072)
- Operational Cooperation in the area of law enforcement JOU-4, Additional Products and Services JOU-5, and Divisional support related costs (EUR 9,095,908)
- Return Activities RSU-1 (EUR 49,403,080)
- The total amount of EUR 174,761,622 was committed at the end-year with 30% that was carried over to 2019.

Following the change of Frontex mandate, the newly established Law Enforcement Sector proved to be a key provider of the operationalisation of EU policies on cross-border crime tackling, especially in the frame of EMPACT/Policy Cycle, extension of the Agency support to prevention and detection of the all types of the cross-border crime in harmony with the respective internal actors, and in close collaboration with EU agencies and bodies, MS Border Guard, Police and Customs authorities and International Organisations.

In 2018, Frontex led, co-led and participated in 57 various Operational Actions under EU Policy Cycle. Moreover, the agency joined the Drugs EMPACT Priority for the first time focusing on the support to EU MS and Europol in the area of counteracting cocaine, heroin and cannabis trafficking via EU external borders. The first actions with Frontex participation will be launched in 2019. This marks already the 8th EMPACT Priority with Frontex engagement making the Agency a fully recognisable law enforcement actor in the EU. In autumn 2018, the Agency took an active part in drafting Operational Action Plans for all related EMPACT Priorities. Many Operational Actions are also supported by the Frontex Fusion Services, analytical and surveillance tools provision, as well as training-related activities.

Regarding the Frontex's co-ordinated JADs the following summaries shall reflect the operational success under the EMPACT/ Policy Cycle umbrella.

JAD Danube 3, was implemented from 11–22 June 2018, focusing on facilitation of illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings, and excise fraud and document fraud associated with the facilitated illegal immigration and THB OAs. It was co-led by Bulgaria and Lithuania (in this case by customs authorities). For the first time, this action was co-led by customs authorities contributing with enhanced control measures at the EU external borders along with border guard officers.

The aim of this JAD was to tackle facilitated irregular migration, as well as to detect the cases of smuggling of excise goods and document fraud use. A joint Frontex-Europol risk analysis was prepared prior to the action and Frontex deployed JAD tailored European Border Guard Team Members at selected border crossing points at the EU's external land borders, along with customs authorities from several Member States and third countries, Europol and INTERPOL experts.

The coordination centre that was set by Frontex in Bulgaria reported 23 migrant smugglers arrested; 63 fraudulent documents detected; 510kg of drugs, 330,000 cigarettes and 12 tons of tobacco seized; 31 stolen vehicles recovered. Frontex's officers also supported the detection of more than 2,160 irregular migrants and 580 persons staying in the EU illegally.

JAD Mobile was held between 24 September and 7 October 2018. The action was focused upon stolen vehicles, illegal immigration and document fraud. The JAD was co-led by Europol, Germany, Greece and Poland. The Coordination Centre was established at the Frontex HQ for the first time and was attended by 16 MS, four third countries, INTERPOL, CELBET and Europol. Europol supported the action in the field as well with its technical tools enhancing SIENA related data exchange between the actors involved. This JAD delivered significant operational results and detected: 500 stolen vehicles; 26 motorcycles; 324 stolen vehicle parts; 202 identity document fraud cases; 33 vehicle related document fraud cases; 7 handguns; 712 kg heroin in one seizure in Bulgaria (largest ever seizure of heroin at Kapitan Andreevo) and 547 kg of marijuana/hashish/skunk/cannabis.

JAD Olympus was implemented between 8 and 21 October 2018. The JAD was co-led with France and was focusing on document fraud and Illegal immigration with particular reference to the forgery and misuse of EU national identity documents. JAD Olympus implementation was based on the platform of Frontex coordinated air Joint Operation Pegasus 2018, with the additional deployment of document fraud experts at selected airports. Ten airports were selected based on a tailored risk analysis.

Key operational outcome: 19 arrests (1 facilitator of illegal immigration identified; 1 trafficker identified); 84 forged /counterfeit documents (visa, passport, ID); 61 incidents of document fraud detected and 29 refusal entries; 55 genuine documents held by impostors detected. 50,000 passengers were checked against the INTERPOL nominal database which resulted in three hits and one arrest.

Highlights: Law Enforcement 2018

In 2018, Frontex coordinated three Joint Action Days, namely JAD DANUBE 3 (June), MOBILE (September – October) and OLYMPUS (October). Those three JADs alone resulted in the detection of more than 6,800 illegal migrants, 177 migrant smugglers, the seizure of more than 530 stolen motor vehicles, 12 tons of tobacco and 825,000 pieces of cigarettes, 390 document fraud cases, as well as more than 1.9 tons of various drugs seized.

These results could only be achieved due to the joint efforts of various Frontex units and the active engagement of the relevant border guard, criminal police and customs services of the Member States.

In 2018, the Agency established the Centre of Excellence for Combatting Document Fraud to enhance field activities on document checks.

Frontex became rapidly the point of reference in activities related to document and identity frauds, enhancing the coordination of implementation of Council and Commission policies on this matter, as well as reinforcing the operational partnership with Europol and INTERPOL. Cooperation with the latter was particularly successful in the frame of the FIELDS (Frontex INTERPOL Electronic Library Document System) project, dedicated to define the business and technical requirements of a transactional system integrating in the frontline databases the Frontex Quick Check Cards.

The newly established Frontex structure has pulled documents and related identity expertise and knowledge into the Frontex Expert Group on Document Control (96 experts and forensic officers from 27 Member States) that contributes horizontally to several Frontex's activities. In this context, a joint conference with the participation of the European Commission and Frontex ICAO New Technologies Working Group set the scene for future synergies between European Union and ICAO on electronic security of travel documents and future standards.

The grip of the Agency on document and identity frauds in field activities was enhanced by deploying its document experts in operations for more than one of every three working days.

Highlights: Centre of Excellence for Combatting Document Fraud 2018

During one of those deployments, the large scale joint action day implemented under the umbrella of EMPACT, Frontex Centre of Excellence Document Experts contributed to the achievements of JAD where 68 stolen and lost travel documents were detected in a parcel sent from Brussels to Athens, with the aim of facilitating the move of irregular migrants from Greece towards mainland Europe.

The Rapid Border Exercise (REX) 2018, an annual fictional operation aimed at testing and eventually improving the capacity of the Agency and Member States to launch a rapid border intervention, corroborated the synergy and cooperation across the agency. The Capacity Building Division mobilised human and technical resources from 23 MS via its OPERA system for the Rapid Reaction Pools and conducted a two-week intensive training phase benefitting Border Surveillance Officers, Screening and Debriefing Experts from 20 Member States, preparing them for the REX deployment.

As per the training delivered to members of the EBCGT, in the course of 2018, several iterations of 9 profile-related courses were delivered to benefit 1,106 members of the teams (see chapter on training for details).

2.4. Return activities

Summary

Return operations

During the reporting period, Frontex increased the operational assistance to Member States by providing support in the following areas.

Returns by scheduled flights – Frontex Pilot Project, Member States carried out over 1083 return operations by scheduled flights to 49 destinations in the frame of the Pilot Project. Over 1477 third country nationals were successfully returned by 17 Member States.

Return operations by charter flights coordinated or organised by Frontex, Member States organised 345 return operations by charter flights, handing over 12 245 returnees and reaching 38 third countries of return. While the number of return operations remained almost unchanged compared with 2017, the number of third-country nationals returned decreased by 14% in 2018. Out of all return operations by charter flights organised in 2018, 139 were joint return operations, 67 collecting return operations and 139 national return operations⁵.

Readmission operations from Greece to Turkey under the EU-Turkey statement, 44 readmission operations were carried out (31 by sea and 13 by air) readmitting 322 third-country nationals. The activity will continue in 2019.

Deployment of monitors and escorts from the Frontex return pools, the Frontex pool of forced-return monitors totalled a number of 66 monitors contributed by 21 Member States. Two hundred thirty-one out of all 345 return operations by charter flights in 2018 were carried out with a monitor on board: 159 of these operations were monitored by monitors from the Frontex's pool.

The pool of forced-return escorts consist of 446 persons from 24 Member States. Three hundred fifty-five forced-return escorts were deployed during the course of 2018.

Framework Contract (FWC) for chartering aircrafts, the Agency chartered 13 aircrafts: 6 for return operations, 2 for connecting flights and 5 for readmission operations.

Frontex Application for Returns (FAR), three new versions of the FAR module on charter flights were released during the year, implementing 291 new requirements. A new FAR module on scheduled flights has been developed and implemented, becoming an integrated part of FAR accessible for all Member States' use.

Pre-return activities

ECRet achieved substantial progress in the field of pre-return throughout 2018, with a key focus on supporting MSs and facilitating the cooperation with non-EU countries and other key partners in the field of pre-return. Additionally, there had been key developments in the areas of digitalisation.

In 2018, ECRet supported the **deployment of 18 return specialists** to three different locations, focusing on different areas of support. In terms of language support, a part-time interpreter (in cooperation with JO Poseidon) supported (pre-) return related activities including identification interviews.

In the field of **identification support** ECRet supported 12 identification missions (both short and long term), involving 1592 cases, resulting in the identification of 926 migrants, and issuance of 488 travel documents. Additionally there were 9 workshops, familiarisation visits and sensitisation missions, building new or enhancing existing cooperation with non-EU countries. One best practices" document has been signed, one is currently being discussed. A pilot has been set up to use video-conferencing equipment for identification purposes.

Cooperation with the EU funded projects EURLO, Eurint and ERRIN has been strengthened, with the phase-in/phase-out activities for Eurint in full swing. A pilot has been set up for the deployment of a Frontex funded EURLO to Ghana to test the possibilities for a handover of the project to Frontex. Frontex is part of the ERRIN MB, and starting the assessment

⁵ - Joint return operation is a return operation in which two or more Member States jointly return third-country nationals by using the same means of transportation or provide mutual technical support (by sharing human resources and/or technical means).

- National return operation is a return operation carried out by a single Member State.

- Collecting return operation (CRO) is a return operation in which means of transport and/or escorts are provided by the third country of return. CRO can be implemented as a joint or national return operation.

of possible handover of ERRIN activities to Frontex in the future. Cooperation with EASO and IOM is further enhanced.

In the field of **ICT developments**, the ECRet developed and consolidated the reference model-RECAMAS (Return Case Management System). The reference model-RECAMAS is a blueprint of an ideal RECAMAS for the MSs, allowing for a greater effectiveness on the management of the return cases. The digitalisation of the return process via the implementation of the model-RECAMAS is expected to furthermore lead to improved statistical reporting at MS and EU-level. In order to achieve these goals, the reference model-RECAMAS introduced key functionalities.

The model is to be used as a baseline for a gap-analysis of the national RECAMAS. Frontex is to provide support to the MS in accordance with the findings of the gap-analyses. In 2018, 3 pilot countries were chosen for a gap-analysis of their RECAMAS and were offered support in accordance with the findings. Concretely, Greece received expert advice in order to expand its system and Belgium was offered a grant in order to conduct further analysis for improving its system.

Furthermore, ECRet secured the handover of the Integrated Return Management Application (IRMA), from the European Commission. Concretely, business continuity was ensured: the service desk team was established and trained, the hosting and maintenance of the platform was secured. When it comes to improvements, the planning for the restructuring of the platform was completed and approved, as well as the planning for the development of IRMA 2.0.

Regarding the capacity development applied to return activities, next to the flights chartered by the MS, Frontex now has the possibility to provide additional capacity through its own framework contract established by the Pooled Resources Unit (PRU). Thirteen flights were organised under this contract in 2018.

In addition to the flights, PRU continued to provide a fully-fledged logistical support in organising the readmission operations under EU-Turkey statement of 2016. In 2018, 33 readmissions were carried on from Greek islands to Turkey using the ferries, busses and medical services contracted by this Unit as well as providing support to Frontex training activities by ensuring the availability of ferries to be used for the return support officer trainings. Furthermore, Frontex Training Unit contributed to the development of the human resource capacities necessary for implementing the return related activities, by developing and delivering specialised return related training programmes.

In 2018, 385 re-admission officers deployed on the Greek island of Lesbos have been trained during 12 dedicated pre-deployment training sessions. Besides, 75 escort leaders have been trained in four Escort Leaders Training sessions to participate in JROs as leaders of national escort teams and 55 officers received return specialist advanced specialised training to prepare them for upcoming deployments as per the relevant EBCG profile. Furthermore, the development of an Escort Officers Training Programme consisting of four modules (one online, two for escort officers and one for leader) continued, the programme being foreseen to be delivered as of 2019.

Cooperation with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD) for delivering training for monitors and training for trainers continued in the context of the EU Forced Return Monitors (FRm II) project. In addition, Frontex provided assistance to the Western Balkan, to the countries who are beneficiaries of the IPA II 'Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey, component 1' by providing return related training sessions. Within the same project, TRU and ICMPD organised one training for forced return monitors of third countries.

The Eastern Partnership Integrated Border Management Capacity Building project was completed, with the final conference held on 20 November 2018. All of the beneficiary countries as well as project partners were represented at the event.

A new cooperation plan with Moldova for the period of 2018–2020 was concluded on 26 March 2018. Preparations for new cooperation plans for the period of 2019–2021 were initiated with Ukraine and Canada. Discussions with Australia on a possible Joint Declaration of Intent, aimed at fostering cooperation, progressed in 2018.

Highlights: ECRet in 2018

1. RECAMAS

- Beta-version of the model-RECAMAS presented to the MSs and version 1.0 ready for dissemination in 2019.
- Gap-analysis conducted in three MSs (Greece, Austria and Belgium) and further expert support provided to MSs (Greece and Belgium).
- Development of an application programming interface with FAR in order to connect it with MS RECAMAS. Process ongoing with Austria.

2. Returns by scheduled flights

- Throughout 2018, the pilot project on returns by scheduled flights exceeded performance goals and contributed substantially to continuous efforts to assist Member States in the implementation of returns.
- By the end of 2018, 17 Member States participated in the pilot project returning 1 476 third-country nationals to 49 destinations.

2.5. Analysis

2.5.1. Risk analysis

Summary

2018 was another year of change for Risk Analysis Unit (RAU). The delivery of regular strategic and operational analytical outputs has been marked by structural changes at Frontex, such as the establishment of Situational Awareness and Monitoring Division, changes within the unit such as the establishment of Third-Country Analysis Sector, the elevation of the vulnerability assessment component in RAU to become a new unit and the preparation for further reorganisation within the Situational Awareness and Monitoring Division to take effect in 2019, namely the move of one of the Risk Analysis sectors to a newly established entity within Situational Awareness and Monitoring Division. Furthermore, the year has been marked by the continuous challenge to continue delivering the products as planned, as well as developing new projects and products while at the same time continuing to provide the expected quality and the timely delivery of analytical support for the enhanced operations of Frontex, as per the EBCG regulation. This was combined with management changes at division, unit and sector levels, and in a scenario of limited human resources, following the stretched Human Resources capacity for recruitment.

Based on the EU Regulation 2016/1624, the Risk Analysis Unit launched the analysis of cross-border crime, terrorism, the risk analysis relevant to the coastguard function, as well as information exchange and cooperation with Europol.

The cooperation with Europol in 2018 included also the participation in the Information Clearing House and the launching of joint analytical products. Furthermore, RAU deployed staff on the flagship maritime operation Sophia (EUNAVFOR MED) with the main objective of enhancing the sharing of intelligence between Frontex, EUNAVFOR MED and Europol, in relation to illegal activities from and towards Libya.

Another example of successful cross-divisional cooperation was the handover of the Integrated Migration Management Application (IRMA) by the Commission to Frontex. Due to the close cooperation of Risk Analysis Unit and the European Centre for Returns within Operational Response Division IRMA can from January 2019 function as a web-based platform where the Commission, Member States, EU Funded Projects (Eurint, EURLO, ERRIN) as well as Frontex can exchange strategic and operational (non-personal) information on return activities as well as third-country information.

As of February 2018 the Third Country Monitoring Team was transferred into a new sector (Third-Country Analysis Sector –TCA) within RAU where the DG Devco funded project ‘Strengthening the Africa – Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC)’ has yielded first concrete results. Furthermore, the product portfolio of the Third-Country Analysis Sector has been consolidated by achieving close to one hundred dedicated analytical products in 2018. In response to the developments on the Western Balkan route, based on the established risk analysis cooperation within the Western Balkan Risk Analysis Network and in coordination with other relevant Frontex’s Units, the European Commission and several EU Member States, a dedicated daily information exchange mechanism has been updated, which will serve among others the purposes of early warning.

Continued increase of data availability for risk analysis and vulnerability assessment, by automating data processing and reporting, allowed for further reduction of the response time to numerous requests for data, information, and analysis. Moreover, open source data were integrated with data collected in-house in order to provide a wider picture of the irregular migration at the European and neighbouring third countries levels. Online data access solutions were implemented for the Air Border Risk Analysis Network to enable Frontex and the Member States to have constant access for to an up-to-date picture at an EU level for well-informed operational response and risk analysis. The vulnerability assessment data project management delivered by RAU in support of vulnerability assessment allowed for improving the processes for data collection and information sharing related to vulnerability assessment processes. The continued implementation of imagery intelligence services under the Copernicus Delegation Agreement combined with training on their relevance for border surveillance led to increased awareness and availability of relevant earth observation products.

AFIC Devco Capacity Building project

In 2018, the implementation of the DG-Devco funded project 'Strengthening the Africa – Frontex Intelligence Community' continued. A highlight worth mentioning is the opening of the first out of eight planned Risk Analysis Cells, which was officially inaugurated at the end of 2018 in Niger, in cooperation with Nigerien authorities.

In parallel, in 2018 the project contained activities to develop the training concept and the delivery of the first three training sessions for African partners as well as organising of a series of regional workshop discussions on the migration trends in the region.

Cooperation between Frontex and 26 AFIC partners is a key element in battling cross-border crime and security threats affecting African countries and the EU.

Maritime Intelligence Risk Analysis Community

In 2018, a new project was launched aiming at the establishment of a thematic 'Maritime Intelligence Community & Risk Analysis Network (MIC-RAN)'. Since its inception, the project has been developing maritime risk analysis capabilities against cross-border crime and supporting EU cooperation on coast guard functions in accordance with the extended mandate of Frontex (EU Regulation 2016/1624). From June 2018 until now, the project has successfully deployed and pilot tested an advanced maritime analytics system, which enabled the creation of different risk analysis workflows and the production of numerous operational and strategic products for various internal and external customers. Within a relatively short period of time, a number of operational successes have been recorded with MIC-RAN support (e.g. identification and targeting of high-risk vessels, detection of multi-ton cannabis resin smuggling, oil smuggling and other confidential cases). The inaugural MIC-RAN meeting with all competent Member States' Agencies took place on 8 October 2018.

Analytical activities supporting return

The analytical products and services supporting return were enhanced with the first annual assessment on return, consolidation of the existing portfolio of analytical products supporting return, including a monthly return support analysis, as well as regular meetings of the Working Group on Return Data for Analysis.

Increased data quality and availability of user-tailored data reports

In 2018, an important part of Risk Analysis Unit activities were dedicated to augmenting the data quality by implementing procedures which facilitated the prompt detection of outliers, trend fluctuations and discrepancies with other datasets.

Also, extensive development was made in providing user-tailored data reports, for both internal and external stakeholders, which allowed for direct access to integrated data from various and trusted sources of information.

Regarding the capacity development dimension, in order to ensure the harmonisation of border management-related risks analysis and develop the specific skills and competences needed by analysts, following the adoption of the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM), TRU delivered two full courses (four modules each) to certify 48 analysts and provided support to eight intensive courses on CIRAM for national border agencies, totalling 200 risk analysts trained in the course of 2018.

2.5.2. Vulnerability assessment

2018 represented an important year with further consolidation of Vulnerability Assessment (VA) activities. To highlight the important role of this new task entrusted to the Agency in the 2016 EBCG Regulation, a new specialised unit (VAU) was created within the Situational Awareness and Monitoring Division in February 2018. Although established as an organisational structure, the unit was not fully staffed until the end of 2018, leading to the assessments and other related activities in 2018 being completed with relatively scarce human resources. Many recruitments to fill the existing posts were on-going at the end of the year.

Overall, the VA activities gained more maturity with the second full cycle of assessments completed in 2018. The quality of information provided by the Member States improved, combined with an increase of the analytical capabilities of the Agency. VAU conducted baseline assessments establishing the overall capacity for border-control for all EU MS/SAC with external borders. Furthermore, tailored simulation exercises were launched to assess capacity and readiness of selected Member States to face upcoming challenges. The Agency also continued to scan the situation at the external borders, leading to initiation of several Emerging Threat Assessments to evaluate and remedy situations at the border before they escalate. In order to mitigate the vulnerabilities identified in the assessments, over the course of 2018 Executive Director issued a series of recommendations on necessary measures to the Member States concerned.

The Agency also released two Biannual Reports to the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the Commission highlighting the results of vulnerability assessments. These reports offer an overview of main vulnerabilities at EU-level and serve to provide new type of information to the high-level decision makers.

An important milestone for vulnerability assessment was achieved in November 2018, when the Management Board adopted the revised Common Vulnerability Assessment Methodology (CVAM). The successful update of the methodology was a result of strong engagement of Member States experts in thorough discussions throughout 2018. The new methodology will help Frontex to better identify and remedy vulnerabilities, by also empowering the Agency to assess Member States' capacities to prevent and detect cross-border crime.

Crucial developments in terms of IT-projects supporting the implementation of vulnerability assessment were also completed in 2018: in order to collect vulnerability assessment information in an efficient and secure way and also to alleviate the administrative burden for the Member States, at the end of 2018 the vulnerability assessment platform was launched. The platform has been rolled out to all 29 MS/SAC and is expected to significantly ease the data collection and information exchange efforts for vulnerability assessment activities.

2.6. Management of pooled resources

Summary

Development and deployment of operational capabilities

The tables below show the numbers of deployed human resources and technical equipment in the operational activities in 2018 as a result of the Annual Bilateral Negotiations (ABN) and the subsequent calls for additional resources.

Deployments in 2018 – total number of EBCGT members, special advisors and additional experts deployed in 2018 by profiles in number of HR and working -days

| Type of deployment / HR profile | No of HR | No of working-days | % of working - days in total |
|--|--------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| EBCGT | 4,047 | 178,502 | 100% |
| Advanced Level Document Officer | 371 | 16,168 | 9% |
| Border Surveillance Officer | 1,280 | 55,165 | 32% |
| Cross-Border Crime Detection Officer | 11 | 372 | 0% |
| Debriefing Expert | 317 | 14,365 | 8% |
| Dog Handler | 97 | 4,035 | 2% |
| European Coast Guard Function Officer | 3 | 315 | 0% |
| Field Press Coordinator | 5 | 370 | 0% |
| First-Line Officer | 119 | 4,783 | 3% |
| Frontex Information Management Officer (FIMO) | 191 | 7,718 | 5% |
| Frontex Support Officer (FSO) | 186 | 8,589 | 5% |
| Frontex Support Officer (FSO) for Logistics and Deployment | 7 | 1,009 | 1% |
| Interview Expert | 7 | 551 | 0% |
| Registration and Fingerprinting Officer | 847 | 36,109 | 18% |
| Screening Expert | 367 | 17,663 | 10% |
| Second-Line Officer | 153 | 6,467 | 4% |
| Stolen Vehicle Detection Officer | 86 | 4,823 | 3% |
| Special Advisors | 59 | 3,932 | 100% |
| Debriefing Expert | 42 | 2,730 | 69% |
| Screening Expert | 13 | 1,055 | 27% |
| Second-Line Officer | 4 | 147 | 4% |
| Additional Experts | 2,611 | 119,552 | 100% |
| Crew member/Technical Staff | 2,018 | 91,209 | 80% |
| ICC/LCC (Coordinating Staff) | 9 | 222 | 0% |
| Interpreter/Cultural Mediator | 401 | 22,217 | 19% |
| Liaison Officer – General (Coordinating Staff) | 12 | 580 | 1% |
| Liaison Officer – TE (Coordinating Staff) | 6 | 276 | 0% |
| National Official (Home Country) | 165 | 5,048 | 4% |
| Total | 6,717 | 301,986 | |

Number of assets deployed from TEP by type of equipment and asset-days

| TE type | No of assets | No of asset-days | % of asset-days in total |
|--|--------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Heavy | 101 | 7,362 | 100% |
| OPV | 16 | 815 | 11% |
| CPV | 12 | 1,054 | 14% |
| CPB | 30 | 2,864 | 39% |
| FWA | 28 | 1,885 | 26% |
| helicopter | 15 | 744 | 10% |
| Light | 209 | 18,132 | 100% |
| patrol car | 158 | 13,382 | 74% |
| TVV | 40 | 2,595 | 14% |
| transportation vehicle | 11 | 2,155 | 12% |
| Portable | 234 | 29,438 | 100% |
| CO2 detector | 26 | 1,360 | 5% |
| Heartbeat detector | 7 | 442 | 1% |
| Other equipment for border surveillance (camera, thermal/infra-red cameras, night vision goggles etc.) | 201 | 27,636 | 94% |
| Total | 544 | 54,932 | |

Year 2018 marked an important change in the way operational capabilities, including technical equipment and human resources, are mobilised for operational activities. In the wake of the challenges faced to cover the 2018 operational needs, a revision of the ABN process was launched with the aim of helping Member States and Schengen associated countries (MSs/SACs) to increase their contribution.

The resulting new ABN process, which is now divided into two 6-months stages, aligns the resources with operational needs in a flexible manner throughout the year as the two-step approach facilitates MS/SAC in planning their pledges. The use of an electronic system for pledging and selecting capabilities was also positively welcomed by the MS, as an interim solution ABNet brought high expectations for a long term solution in the form of Opera Evolution, for which the contract was signed in December 2018. Its gradual implementation is foreseen through several releases through 2019 and 2020, in order to deliver a comprehensive tool to manage all aspects of the operational capability pools.

Looking specifically at the Rapid Reaction Pool (RRP), it is populated with 1,500 border guards in accordance with the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation Article 20(5).

The Rapid Border Intervention Exercise (REX) 2018 was implemented between 18 October and 14 December 2018. It aims to test and to contribute to the increase of the response capacity of Frontex and MS/SAC. The REX is based on a fictitious scenario simulating a migratory crisis at the Croatian external EU borders requiring increased technical and operational assistance.

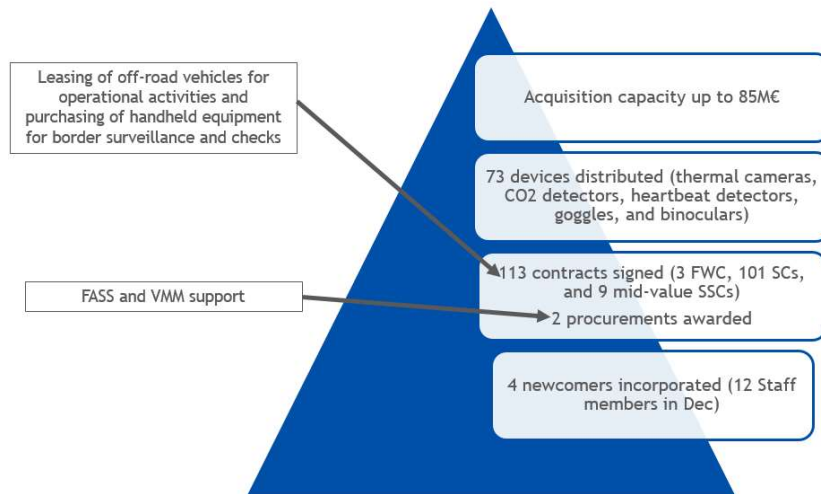
Workplace inspections, aimed at assessing safety and health conditions in operational areas were carried out in Greece and Italy in May and June 2018 respectively, with visits to the competent national authorities. As a direct outcome, the best practice identified in Italy was made available to MS/SAC along with Frontex's own Safety and Health Guidelines, which were developed earlier in 2018. Further safety and health activities included the acquisition of personal protective equipment and patrol emergency bleeding kits. In addition, research into national vaccination schemes commenced to provide recommendations on how to complement them in a harmonised way in the interest of the safety and health of border and coast guards.

The Agency also began developing the process and methodology for Capability Development and Investment Planning, a comprehensive approach assessing what border and coast guard capabilities will be needed for the short, medium and long term. The aim is to launch subsequent development actions in e.g. training, science, technology, equipment, logistics, safety and health.

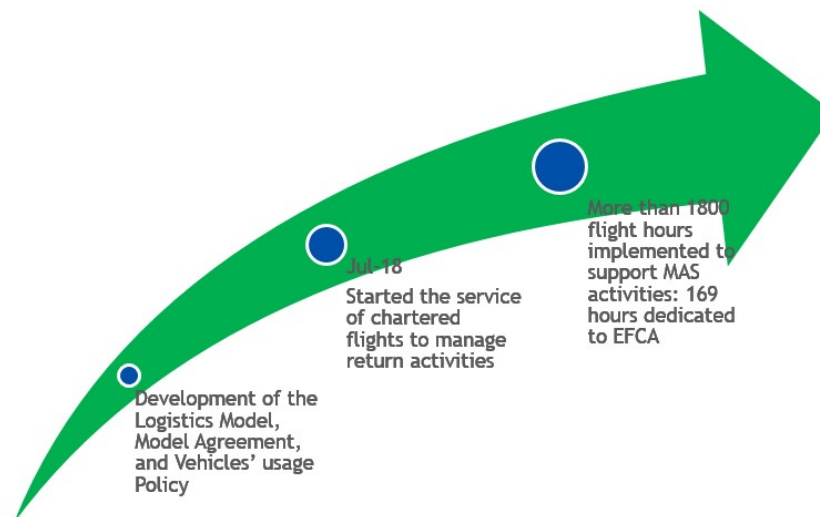
Frontex's own equipment, support and logistics

The Strategy for Acquisition of own Technical Equipment adopted by the Management Board in September 2017 allowed an incremental approach in the acquisition and leasing of Frontex's own technical equipment.

ATLM/Logistics 2018: Quantitative Results



ATLM/Logistics 2018: Qualitative Results



Furthermore, in 2018, the Agency initiated the development of its own logistics model, governing the use of vehicles, facilities and storage of equipment. Tailored model agreements shall be signed with the Member States in the course of 2019.

In 2018, the Agency, under the framework of Research and Innovation, commenced developing minimum technical and operational requirements for the assets deployed in Frontex operations, focusing initially on the requirements concerning maritime equipment. From the work in-progress, overarching requirements were extracted as a baseline for the Commission's 2018 call to Member States for proposals for the Internal Security Fund Specific Actions (ISF-SA). As a result, the Member States, when launching a procurement procedure for technical equipment under this call, now have an obligation to consult the Agency with regard to compliance with these minimum technical and operational requirements. Furthermore, for all assets purchased in this way, the Agency decides in which deployment periods they will be put at the disposal of the Agency. Additionally, for the first time in 2018, the Agency introduced ceiling requirements on the running costs of these assets to be reimbursed to Member States by the Agency.

Highlights: Management of pooled resources in 2018

The **revised annual bilateral negotiations** process was successfully implemented, adopting a semester-based approach to mobilising resources. Mobilising resources for the upcoming six months of the operational lifecycle, as opposed to a full year as in the previous years, makes it easier for MS/SAC to plan and commit contributions.

The **Rapid Reaction Pool (RRP)** remains fully populated with 1,500 border guards as required by the Regulation and the Rapid Reaction Equipment Pool has significantly improved its coverage of identified needs.

Safety and health activities resulted in the acquisition of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Patrol Emergency Bleeding Kits as well as the publication of Frontex's own Safety and Health Guidelines and a translation of the Italian contingency plans for Sicily.

Frontex Aerial Surveillance Services (FASS) contract has been developed into a new enhanced, inter-institutional framework contract for the next 4 years, contributing to the achievement of the requirements as set by Article 52 of the EBCG Regulation. This contract supports the implementation of Frontex operational activities including the activities under the Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance (MAS). The contract covers the operational needs of Frontex and its partner Agency – EFCA.

The very first flight under Frontex contract for **chartering of aircraft for return operations** took place in July 2018, and 14 flights were made by the end of the year. This contract enables Frontex with its own capacity to charter flights for return operations for the upcoming period of three years, and for a total amount of 20 million euros.

According to the adopted strategy for **acquisition and leasing of technical equipment**, Frontex supported the implementation of operational activities by acquiring light equipment for border surveillance and border checks. Seventy-three units of various devices, such as thermal cameras, CO2 detectors, heartbeat detectors, goggles, binoculars were distributed to the operational locations. In parallel, Frontex undertook the activities for concluding the contracts for acquisition of terrestrial technical equipment, such as patrol vehicles and vehicles for migration management support.

2.7. Training

Summary

Operational/pre-deployment training

Frontex Training Unit continued to support the development of the human resources capacities required for the implementation of the operational activities coordinated by the Agency. In this regard, in the course of 2018, the following courses have been delivered:

| Title of the course | Course iterations in 2018 | Number of border and coast guards trained | Satisfaction rate |
|--|---------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Second-line airport officers profile training | 4 | 61 | 94% |
| Training for pool of return specialists | 3 | 55 | 90% |
| Pre-deployment course for dog Handlers (tracking) | 1 | 17 | 100% |
| Pre-deployment course for dog handlers (explosive detection) | 1 | 14 | 100% |
| Frontex support officer (Profile 11) | 3 | 36 | 96% |
| Border surveillance officer – land operations (Profile 9) | 5 | 90 | 98% |
| Profile training courses for screening experts | 4 | 74 | 98% |
| Training for pool of forced return monitors | 1 | 20 | (a) |
| Profile training courses for debriefing experts | 3 | 45 | 96% |
| Advanced level document officer (Profile 8) | 5 | 75 | 96% |
| Rapid exercise (REX) training | 1 | 57 | 96% |
| Frontex course for readmission officers | 12 | 385 | 92% |
| Air crew preparation for joint operations | 3 | 41 | 95% |
| Basic pre-deployment for EBCGT course | 34 | 618 | 88% |
| Escort leaders training | 4 | 75 | 94% |
| European coast guard functions officers | 4 | 46 | 96% |
| Border surveillance officer – maritime operations | 3 | 61 | 92% |
| Return-related training for third countries | 1 (b) | GEO authorities | (c) |

(a) N/A: The course was run by ICMPD with the support of Frontex – different satisfaction criteria

(b) And assistance to training delivered in the context of the IPA II Regional Programme

(c) N/A: The course was run by ECRET with the support of TRU – different satisfaction criteria

Thematic training

Frontex Training Unit continued its support concerning the capacity development in the Member States in the areas covered by the Agency's founding Regulation, delivering training in the following specialised areas:

| Title of the course | Course iterations in 2018 | Number of border and coast guards trained | Satisfaction rate |
|---|---------------------------|---|-------------------|
| Road show on falsified documents | 5 | 375 | 91% |
| Training for visa section staff of EU MS/SAC embassies and consulates in third countries | 3 | 99 | 95% |
| European course for specialists on identity and security documents | 1 | 13 | 90% |
| Table-top exercise on foreign terrorist fighters | 1 | 24 | 100% |
| Certification of canine instructors | 1 | 23 | 100% |
| CIRAM intensive awareness course | 8 | 200 | 87% |
| European course for CIRAM risk analysts | 2 | 48 | 100% |
| Training for Schengen evaluators | 2 | 95 | 95% |
| Training course on the customs and border guard cooperation at the EU external land border crossing points | 2 | 44 | 98% |
| Integrated border management strategy advisors training | 4 | 98 | 97% |
| EU IBM awareness session for third countries | 1 | (a) | 96% |
| The European course for NCC operators | 1 | 26 | 96% |
| Mid-level management course | 1 | 17 | 87% |
| European course for Frontex fundamental rights trainers | 2 | 40 | 99% |
| Ad-hoc training on the Fundamental Rights for first- and second-line officers (delivered upon the PA request) | 1 | 18 | 98% |
| (a) Representatives from 22 countries (Eastern Partnership and Western Balkans) | | | |

In the area of fundamental rights, in 2018, Frontex delivered two iterations of the European course for Frontex fundamental rights trainers for a total of 40 border guard officers. One of these iterations was primarily focused on providing training support to the Western Balkan States in the area of fundamental rights via the IPA II project 'Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey'. As a result of these training events Frontex certified a total of 37 specialists in the area of training of fundamental rights for border guards.

Manuals and educational materials produced, TRU oversaw the development and/or publication of new handbooks and educational material in support to Frontex training activities, such as:

- *Frontex manual on Fundamental Rights for trainers;*
- *Frontex manual for the protection of children at the borders;*
- *Frontex course on the enhanced custom/border guard cooperation at the external land border;*
- *European course for Frontex canine team instructors (product scent detection);*
- *European course for Frontex canine team instructors (general use);*
- *European course for NCC (EUROSUR) Operators;*
- *European course for CIRAM risk analysts (Trainers' handbook);*
- *Best practice for communication via an interpreter;*
- *Trainers' handbook: screening and nationality assumption;*
- *Trainers' handbook for pre-deployment trainers.*

Course development, Frontex TRU developed new courses (either starting delivering them in 2018 or to be delivered in 2019), namely:

- *European course for the protection of victims at the borders;*
- *Frontex course for the protection of children at the borders;*
- *European course for anti-trafficking specialists;*
- *European course for predictive border profiling specialists;*
- *Escort Officers Training Programme;*
- *Basic pre-deployment online course for EBCGT member;*
- *Thematic workshop for dog handlers (tracking);*
- *Thematic workshop for dog handlers (explosive detection);*
- *Course for European coast guard functions officer;*
- *Schengen borders code online training (first line officers);*
- *Course for air crew preparation for joint operations;*
- *Team leaders training (in cooperation with EFCA);*
- *European course for customs and border guard cooperation advisers.*

Career-path education

Common Core Curricula

2018 saw the implementation of the Common Core Curriculum for basic level (CCC) in the MS, SAC and the finalisation of the development process of a new Common Core Curriculum for mid-level (CCC-ML). The CCC-Interoperability Assessment Programme 2019 – 2020 was designed to evaluate the integration of CCC into the national curricula.

Study tour to enhance cooperation between EU and Western Balkan border and coast guard training institutions

Frontex engaged representatives from the border and coast guard academies of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) – now Republic of Northern Macedonia and Serbia in a study tour to the German Federal Police Academy in Lübeck and to Frontex Headquarters to familiarise with the respective facilities and training programmes, to get acquainted with the organisation of basic and advanced courses, the relevant structures and entities in charge and the instruments available to benefit from international cooperation and European pre-accession assistance. The initiative was arranged by Frontex in the context of the Agency's mandate to organise training activities with Member States and third countries and its commitment to promote international cooperation in border and coast guard education.

European joint master's in strategic border management

Out of the originally enrolled 27 students, 26 accomplished the first year of the second iteration of the European Joint Master's in Strategic Border Management and had their dissertation topics approved by the Research Ethics Committee for discussion in 2019.

Mid-level management

2018 saw the development and the delivery of a new course on strategic border and coast guard management. 17 participants from 15 MS/SAC benefitted from the mid-level management course in 2018, acquiring the knowledge, skills and competences for leading functions in the framework of EU border and coast guarding. For the first time, nearly 25% of the 17 participants in the four modules of the course were female officers either already in leadership roles in their home organisations or about to take on leadership responsibilities once successfully having completed the course.

Networks

A new cooperation framework for the partnership academies network has been developed with the establishment of a working group to increase mutual engagement and cooperation with the network now encompassing 39 academies, including two coming from non-EU Member States: Albania and Georgia. The annual heads of the partnership academies conference was organised back to back to the EBCG Day in May to discuss the strategic matters and operational challenges in the EBCG training and education.

Grants

Following the call for proposals, Frontex awarded grants to five joint projects for the development of products and tools for training related to integrated border management. The projects were presented by border and coast guard training institutions coming from Member States, Schengen associated countries and non-EU countries who have working arrangements with Frontex.

Frontex-Cepol joint exchange programme

49 border and coast guards participated in the pilot Frontex-CEPOL joint exchange programme covering the following sub-categories:

- migration management (debriefing, screening, interviewing);
- border surveillance (land/sea/air border);
- border checks (land/sea/air border);
- falsified documents;
- return operations;
- fundamental rights and anti-trafficking in human beings;
- border management at EU level;
- cross-border crime.

Annual training conference

The 2018 annual training conference focused on the maritime domain and involved the representatives from Frontex, EU border and coast guard organisations, EU partner agencies, as well as the representatives from the US. They shared experience and best practices in the realm of border control at sea.

To increase networking and information sharing within the border and guard community, Frontex's Training Unit improved the readability of a quarterly newsletter and started its regular dissemination to its key stakeholders.

Training capacities

The implementation of a pilot quality assurance (QA) system related to training started in early January 2018. In cooperation with a contracted external accreditation agency, an independent review of Frontex Training Unit was undertaken, focusing on existing quality assurance policies and procedures, on the development of quality mechanisms and processes, and on Frontex training courses design, delivery and assessment with the ultimate goal to ensure that Frontex training is designed and delivered in line with EU guidelines and good practices, enabling the required operational competences to be achieved.

The findings from the review contributed to the accreditation process of seven selected Frontex training courses, involving a thorough amendment of the QA system in place and a revision of the courses that were nominated for accreditation. Four hands-on workshops covering quality assurance of assessments and the harmonisation of course materials and Frontex's eLearning platform as well as the standard approach to course design and assessments, were delivered in the course of the year to benefit Frontex course managers, external trainers and assessors.

The implementation phase of the border and coast guard training delivery methodology – train the trainers course started in 2018. The course ensures that, upon completion, the certified trainers are able to contribute to the overall quality of training standards when acting as Frontex trainers, enabling them to effectively design and deliver training content and be able to competently assess the learners' performance and achievements.

In 2018, 50 subject matter experts have been certified as Frontex Trainers, and 25 participants benefitted from the training on 'Course Design in line with Bologna/Copenhagen Principles using the Sectoral Qualifications Framework for Border Guarding', which aims to ensure the operational relevance, standards and quality of training courses in border and coast guarding in line with the Frontex Sectoral Qualifications Framework (SQF) and European principles of course design.

In summary, in the context of the training capacities area, the following training activities took place in 2018:

| Title of the Course/Workshop | Course iterations in 2018 | No. people benefitting from the training | Satisfaction rate |
|---|---------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Course design in line with Bologna/Copenhagen principles using the SQF for border guarding | 1 | 25 | 85% |
| Border and coast guard training delivery methodology - train the trainers | 2 | 50 | 95% |
| Introduction to educational technology | 1 | 30 | 92% |
| WORKSHOP on accreditation benchmarks (process, criteria, evidence requirements) | 1 | 10 | N/A (*) |
| WORKSHOP on harmonisation of Frontex training programmes | 1 | 10 | N/A (*) |
| WORKSHOP on assessment quality assurance – how to effectively plan and assess learner achievement | 1 | 25 | N/A (*) |
| WORKSHOP on quality assurance – how to effectively assure the quality of training programmes | 1 | 20 | N/A (*) |
| English Language Course for Border and Coast Guards – level 1 | (**) | 1,050 | N/A |

(*) Training activities that are not courses do not use the standard feedback form which is used to rate the satisfaction rate.

(**) Online as of 1 August 2018

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In December 18, Frontex Training Unit released the Agency's renewed electronic training portal Aula (<https://truaula.frontex.europa.eu/>), expanding the capabilities of collaboration, communication and cooperation within the border and coast guard community.

In 2018, the online English Course for Border and Coast Guards was launched. It's a new product to enable officers responsible for performing first-line checks and border surveillance to become familiar with specific English terminology and practise their English language skills to break possible language barriers hindering communication with their customers or colleagues. Between the launch of the product and the end of the year, 1,050 users enrolled in the course.

Manuals and educational material produced:

- *Border and coast guard training delivery methodology - course handbook (online);*
- *Course design in line with Bologna and Copenhagen Principles using the SQF for BG course handbook (online);*
- *Training materials package for train the trainers (online);*
- *English course for border and coast guarding (online).*

Highlights: Training activities in 2018

Training delivered, courses developed and training material produced

In 2018, Frontex Training Unit delivered 40 courses in different iterations, totalling 135 training sessions held to benefit more than **3,080 participants** among border and coast guards, members of the EBCGT pools, Frontex staff, third countries law enforcement representatives, consular staff, averaging a satisfaction rate of 95%.

There were thirteen new courses developed in the course of 2018, with **14 new manuals** in support of training activities produced. An online English course for border and coast guards was developed and launched in August 2018. Between the launch and the end of the year, 1,050 users enrolled.

Interoperability Assessment Programme (IAP)

In 2018, Frontex training unit developed the concept of the Interoperability Assessment Programme (IAP) to assess the implementation of the Common Core Curriculum for Border and Coast Guard Training at national level. The IAP focuses on the degree to which participants apply what they learned during the training once they are back on the job, and the effect of the delivered training on the institution they belong to. By allowing monitoring the practical implementation of gained job competencies, the IAP facilitates professional development and the provision of feedback on the relevance of given training resources. These data will contribute to profiling national officers for their deployment in Frontex joint operations.

Frontex training quality assurance system and accreditation

Both the quality assurance system and the trainers' certifications contributed to increasing TRU capacity to develop operational competence, streamline and increase the effectiveness of training processes and scale up the capacity to deliver practical applied training to border and coast guards and enable trainers to design and deliver training and assessments to ensure that the operational competence is met.

The establishment of the QA system enabled the accreditation for seven Frontex vocational courses for border and coast guards:

- European course for national coordination centre (Eurosur) operators
- European course for canine trainer (product scent detection)
- European course for canine team instructor (product scent detection)
- European course for CIRAM risk analysts
- European course for fundamental rights specialists
- Course design in line with Bologna and Copenhagen principles using the SQF for border guarding
- Border and coast guard training delivery methodology – train the trainer.

Graduates from these courses will now receive internationally recognised certificates.

2.8. Research and innovation

Summary

Harmonisation

In 2018, the following activities and results were achieved:

- Support to Member States, eu-LISA, and the European Commission pertinent to the entry/exit system (EES) at the borders was provided. Frontex organised the EES workshop targeting the end-user community; co-organised with eu-LISA a conference on smarter technologies including the EES; contributed as an observer to the EES Advisory Group, EES working group on land and sea borders, smart borders committee and working group on practical handbook.
- In support of the harmonisation of the EU border control capacities with a view to developing best practices and standards, a working group on technology and standards was launched, and baseline technical requirements for maritime equipment were elaborated; a methodology for testing and assessing the performance of document inspection systems was developed and tested in real environment.
- Development of capabilities and practices in the field of Automated Border Control (ABC) and biometric systems for border control. Risk management and mitigation workshop for ABC and biometric systems organised; risk management and mitigation framework for ABC and biometrics systems developed; ABC implementation survey conducted and report published; trainer's manuals on ABC systems revised; technical expert meeting on latest operational performance data on ABC systems organised.
- In support of European and international standardisation activities in the area of border security, contributions were provided to the European Commission (EC) technical sub-group of the Article 6 Committee, European Committee for Standardisation (CEN/CENELEC), International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), International Organisation for Standards (ISO), National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST), and other fora.
- Technical support provided to Frontex business units – namely CED, RAU and TRU – on biometric technology and its vulnerabilities for border control, in particular, pertinent to morphing and document fraud.

Development and technical assistance

In 2018, the work focused on providing technical support and expertise to a variety of stakeholders:

- Guidelines on advance information, aiming at supporting Member States with the development of traveller analysis capacities, were finalised.
- Technical expertise was regularly provided to the European Commission in relation to the feasibility study for a centralised routing mechanism and interactive API.
- Technical support was provided to Member States in order to better plan their border management operations, with an operational research model developed by Frontex for simulation.
- Technical support was provided to Western Balkan countries under the Instrument for Pre-Accession (IPA II).

Technology assessment

The most relevant achievements were:

- Technology assessment of the effectiveness of the border control systems and technologies to support the future acquisition of border management technologies within the EU;
- Enhanced capacity of Member States to perform land, sea and aerial border surveillance thus contributing to improved border security;
- Enhanced operational capacity at EU level through the identification of new communication solutions;
- Increased capacity of the border management community to share sensor data/information at local level;
- Enhanced awareness of the stakeholders of Frontex on the different technologies and systems for border control through the dissemination of the results of the assessments performed;
- Increased operational border control capacities at EU level.

In line with the abovementioned, the main activities implemented were as follows:

Identification of emerging technologies and/or innovative technical solutions for border control:

- biometrics on the move, trial preparation;
- working group meeting on low flying objects;
- workshop and demonstration on mobile devices for border checks.

Testing, trials and demonstrations of technologies/solutions for border control:

- trial of Remotely Piloted Aircraft System (MALE RPAS) for long endurance Maritime Aerial Surveillance;
- maritime analysis tools pilot trial.

Cooperation activities:

- testing and evaluation of a new Copernicus service (wake detection);
- organisation of a workshop with the industry on forecasting changes in the migration flows using open sources;
- participation in Frontex meetings with the industry organised under the innovation project;
- participation in external meetings and conferences addressing technology issues relevant for border control and coast guard functions;
- technical support to other partners such as the European Commission, EU agencies, MSs and TCs.

Innovation

The work in this area focused on:

- strengthening, stimulating and nurturing the dialog between the industry/academia and the border guard community in order to:
 - a) significantly increase border guards' knowledge on border security research and innovation and the latest border control technologies available;
 - b) provide input to industry/academia regarding current research so that its results are useful for the potential end users;
 - c) make industry/academia aware of the real needs of the border guard community as a basis for future research.
- preparations for implementing the provisions referring to the EU framework programme for research and innovation mentioned in the art. 37 of Frontex regulation.

In this context, the following main activities were implemented:

- evaluation of the offers received by the European Commission in the framework of Horizon 2020, the Work Programme 2018 (Secure societies – Protecting freedom and security of Europe and its citizens); involvement in EU-funded border security related projects' reviews, workshops, tests/demonstrations;
- discussions with the EC related to modalities for implementing the provisions referring to the EU framework programme for research and innovation mentioned in the art. 37 of Frontex regulation;
- study on joint cross-border procurement;
- the bi-annual meetings with the industry and the workshops on EU-funded border security research projects and on border security research and innovative solutions/technologies.

Performance assessment methodology for document inspection systems (DIS)

The activity marked the first attempt ever to develop a methodology applicable to different operational environments. The methodology has been tested during a series of dedicated 'test exercises' that took place at five different border crossing points across Europe. The test exercises helped underpin the importance of the methodology, facilitating the assessment of document inspection systems (DIS) performance and allowing for comparison between different document inspections systems in operational use. The test exercises focused primarily on the assessment of DIS for manual control and the automated border control (ABC) systems where applicable.

The methodology constitutes a set of procedures developed to measure DIS's overall and detailed performance. It has proven to be **accurate** as it revealed several shortcomings and/or weaknesses of tested DIS in operation, and **flexible** due to its applicability to different border crossing points and ability to capture performance of DIS in both manual and automated checks. The methodology and the test results will be published in a report that will be presented and critically discussed with the Member States, and the results will also be used to complement current and future standardisation efforts in this area, e.g. in support of the work undertaken by the technical subgroup of the Article 6 Committee, ISO/CEN, and ICAO, to name a few, feeding into the development of harmonised technical and operational requirements for DIS as well as international standardisation activities related to border security.

Standards for technical equipment

The activity concerning the development of minimum technical and operational requirements for maritime equipment is in line with the Agency's mandate to ensure the compatibility and interoperability of the equipment listed in the technical equipment pool by defining technical standards to be met by the Member States contributing to Frontex joint operations.

Research and Innovation Unit was assigned the task to develop minimum technical and operational requirements for technical equipment in support of Frontex operations. After an extensive mapping exercise of different equipment within the technical equipment pool, very fragmented requirements at different levels were found. In order to address this issue and starting with maritime equipment in 2018, a working group comprising of MSs and Frontex experts was created, with the objective to elaborate on harmonised and compatible maritime equipment.

The working group has successfully elaborated the minimum technical and operational requirements that will support Frontex in purchasing its own equipment, support the EC in their decision-making when funding the purchase of technical equipment by MSs financed through the Internal Security Fund and also when MSs make available to Frontex technical equipment that should meet the same minimum requirements thus making the selection procedure objective and transparent. Likewise, the minimum technical and operational requirements will also support the development of the new version of OPERA by ensuring the compatibility and interoperability of the items in the technical equipment pool.

Maritime surveillance capabilities

Frontex conducted a pilot project to explore Medium Altitude Remotely-Piloted Aircraft Systems (MALE RPAS) in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. The project was conducted with the support of the Hellenic Authorities during the last quarter of 2018. The objective of this particular pilot project was to enable Frontex and the European Union border control authorities to test, assess, and evaluate MALE RPAS capability to deliver long-endurance maritime border surveillance operations supporting coast guard functions.

To materialise this pilot activity, Frontex conducted an open procurement out of which a public contract (OP/800/2017/JL) was signed with a consortium (IAI – Israel and AIRBUS DS) to provide a service consisting of 600 surveillance flying hours, delivered over a period of 120 calendar days in 2018. The execution was contracted as a 'turn-key' service, meaning that Frontex paid the provider for surveillance flight hours delivered, including in the contract price all the operational and logistics tasks related to the RPAS deployment and use.

The payload on board the RPAS (radar, AIS, and camera) fulfilled the coastguard function missions assigned as efficiently as any other surveillance asset deployed in the Joint Operation Poseidon, with the added advantage of providing an extended endurance, availability, and reliability. The flight integration scheme set-up by the Greek authorities enabled the RPAS to fly in a non-segregated airspace, and to prove its capability to deliver long endurance maritime border surveillance in a regular, reliable, and cost-efficient way.

2.9. Situation monitoring

Summary

In 2018, Frontex launched 24/7 duty service allowing for a round-the-clock monitoring of the situation at the borders and in the pre-frontier areas. Since 1 October, a team of 13 Senior Duty Officers has been dedicated to supporting this task.

Regular and ad hoc reports provided stakeholders with accurate and close to real-time situational picture of the EU's border and pre-frontier areas, improving situational awareness and increasing reaction capability. In 2018, 4,023 situation monitoring reports produced enhanced situational picture at the borders (14% decrease compared to 2017), 41,039 incidents were detected (4% decrease), reported, and validated in JORA (including 124 serious incidents), 7,848 JORA users were provided with an access to the system (62% increase), 131 requests for information on operational data were processed by the Senior Duty Officers team, and 6,891 documents were uploaded to FOSS (4% decrease).

Eurosur/Copernicus Fusion Services (EFS)

In 2018, a decision was made to create the Information Fusion Centre in order to consolidate the capacities of Frontex Situation Centre Eurosur Fusion Services Sector and Risk Analysis Unit Analytics Sector in addressing growing internal and external demand for the Eurosur/Copernicus Fusion Services. This demand was reflected in 2018 in the stakeholders' rising interest in satellite data, vessel tracking information, and multipurpose aerial surveillance. 2018 marked also an enhanced cooperation with EFS stakeholders – EMSA, EFCA and EU SatCen, and an enhanced Copernicus Programme implementation.

The EFS continued to support Member States and other partners with situation monitoring and information exchange capabilities. In 2018, the EFS contribution included 937 optical satellite images (16% increase), 2,313 vessel detection satellite images (87% increase), 34 reports on tracked vessels of interest (72% decrease), 37 vessels of interest tracked in total (38% decrease), and 491 activated vessel anomaly searches (44% increase).

Eurosur/Copernicus Fusion Services (EFS) real-time surveillance

Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance (MAS) activities were extended to new geographical areas, and in 2018 covered the Central Mediterranean, the Western Balkans, the Aegean Sea, the Black Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. For the first time in the Agency's history, a Remotely Piloted Aircraft was used to support its activities during Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance (MAS) activities in the south of Portugal. This effort translated to 4,924 migrants being detected in the Central Mediterranean and reported to the competent national authorities for follow-up actions (search and rescue and law enforcement cases) and 635 migrants being spotted inland of the Western Balkans and reported to the competent national authority (cross-border crime cases). Throughout the year MAS, as one of the Eurosur/Copernicus Fusion Services, was provided to the stakeholders in combination with other EFS services.

In 2018, FSC launched for the first time real-time surveillance activities over land areas. The Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance service has been activated over the pre-frontier area of the Croatian section of the EU's external border. The MAS-Western-Balkans mission started on 18 July 2018 in cooperation with the Croatian Ministry of Interior. MAS performed flights over the pre-frontier areas from the Zadar Airport. Cooperation with the Croatian authorities included an involvement of Croatian experts in the European Monitoring Team (EMT) at Frontex, coordinating the MAS mission, as well as continuous communication between the EMT and the authorities, ensuring appropriate follow-up activities are performed following MAS sightings.

From 18 July 2018 until the end of the year, 635 irregular migrants were sighted by the MAS aircraft attempting to cross the EU external border from Bosnia and Herzegovina into Croatia. MAS reported 46 sightings, all of which were notified to relevant authorities. The single biggest detection took place on 22 August, when MAS aircraft sighted a group of 89 irregular migrants attempting to cross the border towards Croatia. The Croatian authorities were swiftly notified of the detection and an operational response on the ground followed.

The real-time surveillance on land has not only contributed to the detection of irregular migration, but has also triggered law enforcement activities. On 27 September, MAS aircraft sighted a group of migrants boarding a van in the proximity of the border. The aircraft closely monitored the van and its movements, and reported the incident to the authorities. Thanks to MAS intelligence, the van was intercepted on a highway, and two facilitators, together with the migrants, were apprehended. Regarding the capacity development dimension, Frontex Aerial Surveillance Services (FASS) proved to be of high added value to the Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance activities (MAS) conducted under the lead of Frontex Situation Centre. During 2018, more than 1,800 flight hours were implemented to support MAS activities, out of which 169 hours for specific purposes of EFCA.

2.10. International and European cooperation

Summary

Cooperation with third countries

In line with the International Cooperation Strategy 2018–2020, Frontex has further increased its international engagement with countries of origin and transit for illegal immigration along the key migratory routes to the EU. In 2018, particular efforts were dedicated to strengthening the dialogue with North and West African countries, including official visits of the Executive Management to Egypt, Senegal and Ghana. Frontex started the implementation of a new EU-funded project ‘EU4BorderSecurity’ addressing countries in the Southern Neighbourhood of the EU and continued the implementation of another project aiming to strengthen the Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC; see also section 2.5.1). Moreover, Frontex supported the International Training Centre at the Egyptian Police Academy (ITEPA), an EU-funded project of Italy and Egypt that entails the delivery of a series of training courses to border police officers from 22 African countries in Cairo. The Agency also started negotiations on working arrangement with The Gambia and further advanced on negotiations with the authorities of Senegal, Niger and Guinea.

The Agency also worked closely with civilian CSDP missions (e.g. EUBAM Libya, EUCAP Sahel Mali/Niger), supporting their work with expertise and advice and relying on their cooperation frameworks for engagement with the third-country authorities. For example, since 2017, Frontex experts have been regularly supporting EUBAM Libya in Tunis – first through short-term deployments. In cooperation with Italy and EUBAM Libya, the Agency developed a pilot training module for the General Administration of Coastal Security (GACS) of Libya. The trainings will be carried out in 2019.

Turkey and the Western Balkans region continued to be important priorities across various areas of the Agency’s work. The Agency continued to support Western Balkan authorities through the multiannual capacity building project for the ‘Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey’.

Cooperation with the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries continued through the EaP Integrated Border Management Capacity Building Project and some bilateral initiatives. A cooperation plan was concluded between Frontex and the General Inspectorate of Border Police of Moldova for the years 2018–2020.

Highlights: International and European Cooperation in 2018

Eastern Partnership Integrated Border Management (EaP/IBM) Capacity Building Project

At the end of 2018, Frontex successfully closed the Eastern Partnership Integrated Border Management Capacity Building Project. Under the umbrella of the EaP/IBM Flagship Initiative, the project aimed at strengthening the capacities of the EaP countries to apply IBM in line with the European best practices. With the overall budget of EUR 4.5 million over a period of four years (2014 – 2018), the project represented an integral part of the overall EU support to the countries of the region – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine.

The project was the first technical assistance initiative implemented by Frontex as a leading agency in close co-operation with the World Customs Organisation (WCO), the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). This initiative supported the establishment of a training system on IBM in the six beneficiary countries and served as a regional platform of exchange on IBM best practices and lessons learned. At the same time, it facilitated interagency cooperation between border guards and customs services in the EaP region.

More than 120 activities and 83 training sessions took place within the framework of the project. As a result, 1,200 border and customs officials were trained on topics such as document checks, interview techniques, screening and identification of nationalities, combatting trafficking in human beings and fundamental rights.

Start of a new project in the Southern Neighbourhood - EU4BorderSecurity

In December 2018, Frontex started a three-year capacity building project 'EU4BorderSecurity'. Financed by the European Neighbourhood Instrument, the project seeks to enhance border security in the Southern Mediterranean, North Africa and the Levant, by fostering bilateral and regional cooperation, while facilitating *bona fide* travel. It will contribute to building trust, understanding, structured partnerships, and exchange of experiences and practices in the IBM domain. The project will familiarise the participating countries with the mandate and work of Frontex and enhance their capacity to conduct risk analysis, situation monitoring and operational border and coast guard operations. This way it will aim to contribute to the fight against security threats, particularly organised crime and terrorism in the region. Operational and country specific capacity building support will be based on the priorities identified by the partner countries.

The EU4BorderSecurity project will proactively seek to identify and exploit synergies by complementing and enriching already ongoing activities in the border management/security domain. The action plan will take into account specific idiosyncrasies of each country's border management context and needs, and will promote increased ownership by the partners. Furthermore, the project will combine development of bilateral relations with Frontex and will deliver capacity building support to national border management authorities. It will pursue close cooperation with international actors and EU Member States active in the region.

EU4Border Security is multidimensional and built upon two axes:

- horizontal and cross-cutting dimension with the objective to build trust and understanding through a dedicated platform for sharing knowledge and experiences;
- capacity-building dimension focusing on IBM component areas through sub-regional activities, tailor-made national training programs and small-scale technical assistance actions.

Cooperation with EU partners and international organisations

In 2018, Frontex continued strengthening its cooperation with both EU and international partners by, among others, implementing and revising various cooperation plans and working arrangements. The Agency also supported the EU policy makers and legislators on numerous cases by providing technical and operational advice within its area of expertise.

In the area of freedom, security and justice, Frontex continued its close cooperation with its peer agencies, in particular Europol, EASO, eu-LISA, CEPOL and Eurojust, within the framework of the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies Network as well as through bilateral partnerships. Contacts with EU entities outside of the JHA remit, such as EASA or EDA, were also taking place, reflecting Frontex's broad, multidisciplinary approach to security.

Frontex activities reflected the growing need for cooperation between civil and military actors reinforcing and bridging the internal and the external security of the EU. In this regard, Frontex enhanced its cooperation with the CSDP EUNAVFOR Med Operation Sophia, including deployment of its officers to the Operation's Crime Information Cell. It enhanced fruitful cooperation with the European Defence Agency (EDA). The first joint training project between Frontex and EDA under the auspices of the Austrian Presidency was conducted.

In the area of coast guard functions, the cooperation through the tripartite working arrangement between Frontex, EMSA and EFCA allowed for a greater support to the activities of the national authorities in the maritime domain.

Frontex became a regular, active participant in the Customs Cooperation Working Party (CCWP) as well as a strategic counterpart in the customs environment, in particular in the relationship with the Customs Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border Expert Team (CELBET). This reflects the increasing need to deepen structural cooperation between customs and law-enforcement actors, as they operate in the same environment and tackle the same threats.

In 2018, Frontex also explored possibilities on how to further enhance its cooperation and develop strategic partnership with international organisations such as INTERPOL, WCO, OSCE and UNHCR. Cooperation covers fields such as migration, border management and fighting cross-border crime. Frontex sought to build upon the existing working arrangements and to explore the possibilities of developing new ones.

A new ICT platform for facilitating the reporting mechanism serving coordination of Member States' activities in third countries has been developed and delivered; it will contribute to the cooperation with Member States and Schengen associated countries.

Highlights: EU partners and international organisations

Joint Europol-Frontex Management Board meeting

In October 2018, Frontex and Europol held a joint Management Board in the Hague. It was the first meeting of this kind. It offered a unique opportunity for Frontex to present the agency's tools and capabilities to its partners in Europol and Member States. Frontex informed participants about its presence on the ground, as well as providing a comprehensive picture of the situation at the external borders. The meeting was also a good occasion to discuss both agencies' work in many fields, such as information exchange, risk analysis, joint presence in hotspots and preparations for the implementation of ETIAS. The Management Board discussion was facilitated by concrete examples of operations conducted jointly by the two agencies and Member States.

The Executive Directors of both agencies took the opportunity to sign a statement of principles for collaboration between Europol and Frontex. They will be guiding the daily cooperation between the agencies, strengthening the synergies and mutual operational support between the two agencies. They confirm and strengthen the special partnership between Europol and Frontex and their joint commitment to tackle key security challenges.

The joint Frontex-Europol Management Boards meeting was a remarkable event, showing the strengthening partnership and increasing cooperation of the two agencies. The meeting offered a great opportunity to present the work the agencies do together and to discuss future cooperation. The Member States offered their feedback and ideas on how to shape joint work against key security challenges. The meeting confirmed that Frontex is a well-established security actor and a valuable partner to police community. This was particularly important in light of the growing need for enhancing cooperation between the EU security actors.

Regarding the capacity development dimension, in the context of the Frontex-led IPA II Regional Programme, Frontex Training Unit supported the development of border management capacities in the Western Balkan countries by delivering train the trainers and specialised courses in the areas of fundamental rights and return. In addition to that, a study tour was organised engaging representatives from the border and coast guards academies of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslavia Republic of Macedonia (FYROM) and Serbia. The study tour took participants to the German Federal Police Academy in Lübeck and to Frontex's Headquarters. The aim was to familiarise participants with the training programmes, the organisation of basic and advanced courses, the relevant structures and entities in charge and the instruments available to benefit from international cooperation and European pre-accession assistance.

In the context of interagency cooperation and synergy, TRU supported:

- EASO in the development of the Sectoral Qualification Framework for asylum officials and reception;
- The European Security and Defence College in the development of Sectoral Qualifications Framework for military officers;
- EFCA in the feasibility assessment on the development of a potential Sectoral Qualifications Framework for fisheries control;
- JHA Agencies training network on developing a common approach for quality assurance of law enforcement training;
- CEPOL on developing a sound approach to align the training to the European qualification framework.

Liaison officers to Member States and third countries

In 2018, Frontex continued to develop and maintain networks of Frontex Liaison Officers (FLOs) in Member States and third countries.

The Agency recruited and trained 11 FLOs to be deployed in Member States and Schengen associated countries, most of them with a regional mandate covering up to four MS/SAC. By the end of 2018, four FLOs were effectively deployed in Member States hosting the main seat.

Frontex also continued to develop its FLO network in third countries. The presence of FLOs in Turkey, Niger and the Western Balkans (main seat in Serbia) are already showing first results in closer engagement with the authorities of third countries.

The FLOs are collocated to the respective EU Delegations in third countries and closely cooperate with the European Migration Liaison Officers (EMLOs), Immigration Liaison Officers (ILOs) of the EU Member States and other EU actors as CSDP missions.

Further deployments are planned in the priority regions indicated by the Management Board in 2018, namely in Northern and Western Africa, Horn of Africa, the Silk Route region, and the Western Balkans. In this light, and following the decision of the Management Board, the Agency started to work on the deployment of a FLO in Senegal, who is expected to be recruited and deployed in 2019.

In order to support the FLO networks, the Agency established a dedicated back-office within the International and European Cooperation Division. The back-office provides support, monitors and guides the FLOs, and facilitates the interaction between FLOs and the Frontex's Headquarters. It also analyses and processes the outcomes of the FLO activities (e.g. regular reports), and ensures awareness and follow-up by various Frontex business entities.

Highlights: Frontex Liaison Officers Networks in 2018

Frontex Liaison Officers to EU Member States

In 2018, Frontex started the deployment of FLOs to 30 EU Member States and Schengen associated countries – a new task entrusted to the Agency in the EBCG Regulation. The role of the FLOs is to foster cooperation and dialogue between Frontex and national authorities responsible for border management and return, including coast guards to the extent that they carry out border control tasks. They are also meant to play an important role in the context of the Frontex's vulnerability assessment activities.

Following the decision of the Frontex Management Board, 11 FLOs are deployed to the following country clusters:

1. Austria, Germany, Liechtenstein, Switzerland – the main seat in Germany
2. Belgium, Iceland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands – the main seat in Belgium
3. Bulgaria
4. Croatia, Slovenia, Hungary, Romania – the main seat in Hungary
5. Cyprus, Greece – the main seat in Greece
6. Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia – the main seat in Slovakia
7. Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden – the main seat in Sweden
8. Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania – the main seat in Latvia
9. France
10. Italy, Malta – the main seat in Italy
11. Portugal, Spain – the main seat in Spain

In the course of the year, all 11 FLOs were recruited and started their pre-deployment phase in Frontex's Headquarters in Warsaw. Each FLO undergoes on average a 3-month pre-deployment training.

2.11. Media and Public relations

Summary

To promote the achievements of the Agency and in line with its commitment to openness and transparency, Media and Public Relations (MPR) continued to facilitate access of journalists to Frontex's operations. In 2018, some 50 journalists visited operational areas in Spain, Italy, and Greece. Furthermore, almost 30 of them were embedded on vessels, helicopters or aircrafts during patrolling activities and search and rescue operations.

The journalists represented national and international media outlets including BBC, CBS, El Pais, El Mundo, AFP, New York Times London, Bavarian TV/ARD, YLE, France 3, NHK, Japan Broadcasting Corporation, Le Figaro, ZDF, The Independent, France 5, and Discovery Channel. Furthermore, Frontex also organized six press conferences and briefings held by the Executive director for journalists. These took place in Madrid, Brussels, Dakar, Athens, Sopot and Algeciras and gathered about 120 journalists.

In 2018, Media and Public Relations Office continued to carry out a wide range of outreach activities. In its headquarters in Warsaw, Frontex hosted over 560 guests who included students, researchers, police academy cadets and military officers. Our spokespersons briefed them on Frontex's activities, answered their questions and provided relevant printed materials.

Each month, Frontex receives numerous requests for information and access to its operations from the general public. We contributed to a wider academic discussion about migration by providing information about Frontex and the role of European Institutions in general to Master and PhD students and researches from European academic institutions and beyond. Additionally, our spokespersons were invited to present at a number of different venues including universities, embassies, and various government departments, speaking to over 150 people in total.

In 2018, we published 39 press releases on migratory flows, new operations and events organized in the headquarters and in operational areas. The press releases were often accompanied by short videos published on Frontex's social media channels. MPR supported the expansion of the Vega Children concept, an initiative to better identify and refer children at risk on the move across the external borders through the publication and dissemination of a thematic handbook in 32 languages.

MPR also supported different teams and divisions by organizing in-house and external training sessions including editorial training for myFX content creators, media training and presentation workshops.

Last year, Frontex continued to expand its presence on social media launching Frontex's Facebook page. In the first four months we published 66 Facebook posts, gained 3,850 followers and reached an average of 10,000 people with Frontex's video content. In 2018, the number of followers of Frontex on Twitter grew to 21,000, and the number of tweets published reached 277. We also put together Frontex social media guidelines, accompanied by an animated video, for all Frontex staff and the deployed officers.

Last year, the total number of followers of Frontex LinkedIn page launched the previous year increased by close to 100% in comparison to 2017 (from 6118 in 2017 to 12 202 in 2018) and total number of organic impressions (the number of times each update is shown to LinkedIn members) increased by 322% in comparison to 2017 (from 429 878 in 2017 to 1 388 471 in 2018).

In 2018, MPR produced eight short videos about key Frontex's activities as well as over one hundred reports, training manuals and brochures. The movies were one of the most viewed content on Frontex's website and on social media channels in 2018. MPR also produced eight feature stories for the website and created 24 profiles of officers deployed in Frontex's operations that were shared on our social media platforms. MPR was involved in the EU Protects project coordinated by the European Commission promoting European cooperation. The communication materials produced focused on security and migration. The videos and web stories about Frontex will be published in the first quarter of 2019.

To make the information about the Agency accessible to all EU citizens, in November 2018 Frontex launched a multilingual version of its website in all 24 official languages of the EU. Moreover, all new videos were also subtitled in 24 languages.

Frontex's growing staff was the focus of internal communication team which launched several new initiatives aimed at staff integration. These included monthly birthday breakfast meetings with the Executive Director, family day and Frontex happy hour. We also organised an internal day which focused on sports activities and a Christmas party for all staff and their spouses or partners.

2.12. Fundamental rights

Summary

As part of the regular duties, Fundamental Rights Office (FRO) continuously provided observations and recommendations to all operational plans and evaluation reports for the consideration of operational units. FRO has been appointed as the coordinator to three serious incident reports on fundamental rights submitted by participants to operations as well as derived from open sources reporting in 2018. FRO team supported operational training sessions. During the evaluation meetings on operational activities in 2018, FRO addressed to MS the need to discuss modalities and the scope of data collection for the purpose of an effective measuring of the implementation of the referral mechanism.

FRO team actively participated in numerous operational activities, such as briefings for Team Members to be deployed within the JO Focal Points Land and JO Coordination Points, to Frontex's Liaison Officers to MS and TCs, airport representatives and International Organisation Experts for JO Alexis, Deployed Officers/EU Advisers and airport representatives for JO Coordination Points Air and in the framework of VEGA children as well as several trainings and workshops for Team Leaders of De-briefers. Likewise, FRO supported the harmonisation of procedures related to medical assistance in return operations, engaged in the familiarisation visits of third countries in the area of return and took part in the Direct Contact Points in Return Matters & Pre-Return Activities Network meetings.

FRO team undertook several field visits to the EU external borders in view of monitoring the operational activities and providing guidance on fundamental rights compliance.

In 2018, FRO received over 150 monitoring reports which mainly served to provide concrete recommendations as well as to adjust training needs of those organising the implementation of return operations.

With regard to the deployment of forced-return monitors from the pool of monitors, FRO was regularly involved in the selection of monitors, together with Pooled Resources Unit and the European Centre for Returns, followed by an open call sent to relevant bodies in the Member States. By taking part in this process, FRO ensured that the skills and competences of the monitors allow them to carry out their tasks in accordance with fundamental rights.

FRO team took part in return and readmission operations to monitor the return activities, provided guidance on fundamental rights compliance and participated in meetings and workshops related to the Forced-Return Monitoring II project (FRM) implemented by ICMPS in conjunction with Frontex and FRA.

Additionally, FRO Team participated in the development of several training sessions and training materials (CCC basic & mid-level, preventive profiling and operational training AID 2019). For the CCC basic level, the team reviewed and provided comments for mainstreaming fundamental rights in the CCC Interoperability Assessment Programme (IAP).

Throughout the year 2018, FRO and the team were engaged in the induction training sessions for newcomers on a monthly basis. The engagement in this activity is deemed crucial since the new Regulation has clearly stepped up the fundamental rights obligations of the European Border and Coast Guard staff. FRO also was engaged in the revision of the concept on fundamental rights training for Frontex staff to be delivered.

In 2018, a total of ten complaints were received. After performing an admissibility review, three complaints were declared admissible and have been forwarded to the relevant MS authorities and the Executive Director. In relation to complaints declared inadmissible, FRO responded individually and provided information on other remedies available for complainants to address to other institutions or authorities, in accordance with the principle of good administration.

With regard to the complaint mechanism, the FRO further developed and disseminated communication materials such as a booklet and a poster to raise awareness about the complaints mechanism. Hard copies of the booklet are available in operational areas and on Frontex website in 11 languages: English, French, Arabic, Urdu, Pashtu, Tigrinya, Albanian, Serbian, Farsi, Russian and Spanish. A video on the complaints mechanism has been produced for debriefings and other relevant training activities /presentations for Frontex staff, in particular deployed officers and members of the teams, with the aim to raise awareness of the complaint mechanism.

Highlights: Fundamental rights in 2018

Child protection

When it comes to child-protection training, FRO substantially contributed to the design of such a training on child protection for border guards. It will include a child-friendly and gender-sensitive approach when collecting fingerprints and other biometric data. Child protection training aims at enhancing awareness among the border guard community about the rights and needs of children on the move to ensure that border guarding measures take the best interest of the child into account.

FRO was intensively engaged in the development of VEGA Handbook on Land Borders which is available in FOSS. The handbook aims to increase the awareness of border guard officers with regard to children (minors) who are crossing the external land border of the European Union, whether they are unaccompanied or not. This can improve the identification of children on the move at risk at land borders, while ensuring respect for their rights and enhancing action taken against criminal threats to their well-being.

Return operations

FRO contributed to the new Code of Conduct for Return Operations and Return Interventions. This new Code offers a strong basis to raise behavioural standards and ensure that return operations and return interventions are performed in a humane manner, with the strictest compliance with fundamental rights.

Regarding the capacity development dimension, in 2018, two iterations of the European course for Frontex fundamental rights trainers were held for a total of 40 border guard officers. One of these iterations was primarily focused on providing training support to the Western Balkan States in the area of fundamental rights via the IPA II project 'Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey'. As a result of these training events Frontex certified a total of 37 specialists in the area of training of fundamental rights for border guards.

As of 2018, mobile training teams specialised in fundamental rights and child protection are available to conduct training activities upon request. Taking advantage of this possibility, an event was conducted at the Romanian Alexandru Ioan Cuza Police Academy, where Fundamental Rights training for first and second line officers was conducted and attended by 18 Romanian Border Police officers.

In December 2018, following an extensive process, the European course for fundamental rights specialists was successfully accredited, attesting the course's alignment with the European standards for vocational education and training and that the courses provides the border and coast guards with the relevant skills and competences required to perform their demanding jobs.

With the support of national experts from Member States' border authorities, EU agencies (in particular, EASO and FRA), international organisations (such as, in particular, IOM, UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross) and the non-governmental organisations of the Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights, Frontex continued its work on developing new courses and updating the existing ones in line with the latest developments in the area of fundamental rights and child protection. The content of a new manual for Frontex fundamental rights trainers, was developed in cooperation with the Frontex Fundamental Rights Officer and the Frontex Consultative Forum on Fundamental Rights (publication foreseen in 2019).

In 2018, Frontex Training Unit also completed its work on the European course on the protection of children at the borders. The course streamlines the child protection and best interests' considerations in line with international and EU law and relevant good practices in the operational work of frontline officers at all stages of border control. The Manual on protection of children at the borders was produced in cooperation with key international, EU and non-governmental stakeholders (Publication foreseen in 2019).

In the course of the year, Frontex Training Unit focused its attention on following the victim-centred approach and protection of the fundamental rights of victims' of trafficking and other serious cross-border crime in a number of new courses and/or course modules, such as:

- the European course for Frontex anti-trafficking specialists;
- the course on anti-trafficking for border officers;
- the course on the protection of children against cross-border crime;
- Frontex course on protection of victims at the borders;
- the course module on preventive profiling.

Information on the complaints mechanism as part of the Annual Report 2018

Pursuant to Article 72(9) of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation (EBCG) 2016/1624, the Fundamental Rights Officer (FRO) 'shall report to the executive director and to the management board as to the Agency's and Member States' findings and follow-up made in response to complaints. The Agency shall include **information on the complaints mechanism in its annual report**'.

The complaints mechanism framework is set up as an administrative mechanism aiming at safeguarding the respect for fundamental rights in all field activities or return activities of the Agency. The FRO is responsible for handling complaints received in writing by the Agency from individuals directly affected by the activities of the Agency, or their representatives, in accordance with the right to good administration. The FRO is in charge of performing an admissibility check and referring admissible complaints for follow up and findings to the relevant Member State (MS) authorities and the Agency's Executive Director (ED), as applicable.

In 2018, the FRO has received a total of ten complaints (10). The FRO performed admissibility reviews whereas three (3) complaints were declared admissible. National procedures are currently ongoing and FRO is consolidating information on the findings upon receipt, requesting updates as necessary.

Further details of the admissible complaints as per Recital 50 of the EBCG Regulation

CMP-2018-00005 in relation to CMP-2017-00001

- Complainant: family of six (6) persons, including four (4) children, who had formally expressed to the competent authorities their will to seek for asylum in Greece.
- Frontex activity: Air Readmission Operation on 20 October 2016 from Greece to Turkey.
- Allegation types: right to asylum (Art. 18 of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights); Rights of the child (Art. 24); protection in the event of removal, expulsion or extradition (Art. 19).
- Alleged perpetrator: Member State, Frontex implementation.
- Type of case: standard, reported weeks after the event.
- Follow-up and findings:

The FRO ensured the follow-up on the case, pursuant Article 72 (4) of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation since January 2017. On 25 October 2017, after several requests from FRO, the Hellenic National Focal Point of Contact (NFPoC) notified via email to the FRO that the complaint was still under investigation by the General Inspectorate of Public Administration. On 13 February 2018, the ED submitted a letter to Greek NFPoC asking for urgent follow-up on the investigations.

On 17 July 2018 a new complaint CMP-2018-00005 was submitted based on the lack of response on findings and follow up of complaint CMP-2017-00001. Violation of the Right to good administration is added to the previous alleged violations above mentioned. The FRO requested periodically to the NFPoC a response on the follow-up and a meeting was held. On 3 December 2018, the Director of Border Protection Division submitted a letter to the FRO reporting that the actions of the Hellenic Police do not fall under the competence of the General Inspector of Public Administration. In light of the results, the Hellenic Police informed that they ordered an internal Preliminary Administrative Investigation.

To the end of the reporting period, 31 December 2018, the FRO has not received feedback from the Hellenic authorities and the deadline foreseen in the Agency's Rules has expired. In the opinion of the FRO, this situation endangers the effectiveness of the complaints mechanism and the principle of good administration and due diligence that should be observed.

CMP-2018-00008

- Complainant: one person returned by plane from Madrid, Spain.
- Frontex's activity: Joint Return Operation on 26 September 2018 from Spain to Colombia.
- Allegation types: human dignity (Art. 1 of the European Charter); prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Art. 4).
- Alleged perpetrator: Member State, Frontex implementation.
- Type of case: standard, reported two (2) months after the event.
- Follow-up and findings: The Spanish Police on 18 December 2018 reported back to the FRO. FRO requested additional information on allegations addressed by the complainant.

CMP-2018-00009

- Complainant: person with disabilities and reduced mobility.
- Frontex activity: Joint Operation Land on Border Checks. Polish-Ukrainian border, Dorohusk Border Crossing Point, 13 September 2018.
- Allegation types: integration of persons with disabilities (Art. 26 of the European Charter).
- Alleged Perpetrator: Member State, Frontex implementation.
- Type of Case: standard.
- Follow up and Findings: pending; complaint forwarded to NFPoC on 17 January 2019.

In relation to complaints declared inadmissible, FRO responds individually with detailed explanations about the reasons for inadmissibility, and provides – whenever possible – information on other remedies available, when known, in case complainants wish to address their complaints or concerns to other institutions or authorities, in accordance to the principle of good administration and the information provided by MS themselves.

Outlook

Following the principle of good administration and the subsequent need to ensure access to information on the complaints mechanism, FRO further developed and will continue with the dissemination of information material to raise awareness about the complaints mechanism and its procedures.

2.13. Data protection

Summary

Throughout 2018, the Data Protection Officer (DPO) has been involved in 145 meetings in its capacity to provide guidance and advice on an array of activities with an impact over the processing of personal data. DPO, in addition, received over 130 requests for advice. Under the previous data protection legal regime, 53 notifications for consultation; out of these 9 have been completed, 3 were suspended and 41 remain pending⁶ under different stages of completion, awaiting for DPO input or redrafting by the controllers. DPO received 2 data subject requests that were answered within the legal time frame, and was involved in the handling of two data breaches and commented or drafted over 120 documents, ranging from contracts, agreements or policies.

DPO conducted an inventory of data processing activities conducted in Frontex which resulted in the identification of 188 processing operations conducted over personal data. Out of these, 53 are in the public register of processing operations.

The entry into force on 11 December 2018 of the new Data Protection Regulation marked a shift in the way data protection is handled within the Agency. A highlight in this topic is that the specific Operational Personal Data Chapter may be used for the processing of personal data conducted by PeDRA and that its applicability is no longer excluded from Frontex operations. This is the result of several actions conducted by the Data Protection Officer, Management and the Brussels Liaison office to explain the operational needs of the Agency. They were recognised by the EU legislator that decided to grant the flexibility required for the processing of operational personal data for analysis and transmission purposes.

Due to the new obligations set by the new data protection regulation, DPO has issued a new template for records of processing operations with guidelines on how to fill them in. Likewise, and in order to fill the legislative gap created between the entry into force of the general Data Protection Regulation and the EU Institutions Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Officer issued a template with model clauses for annexing to contracts when contracting third parties that were processing personal data on behalf of Frontex.

On December 2018, DPO organised a successful first meeting with the EDPS to initiate dialogue on the PeDRA expansion and the new activities conducted by the Agency for implementing the 2016 mandate in relation to processing of personal data. In addition to this meeting, the EDPS provided a training on the new data protection regulation specifically aiming at Frontex Controllers.

⁶ Notifications labelled as 'pending' remain in the hands of different stakeholders, i.e. some are pending on the DPO's side for the review and comments. Others were commented and are pending on the controllers' side for adapting the notification in accordance to the comments received. It needs to be considered that since 11 December 2018, notifications do not longer exist and all notifications will have to be re-submitted following the obligations of the new Data Protection Regulation.

Highlights: Data protection in 2018

Frontex Application for Returns (FAR) got the prior approval from the EDPS. Some recommendations need to be implemented and ECRet has drafted an implementation plan in cooperation with the DPO to address them.

New draft for repealing and replacing the Management Board rules on operational personal data has been presented to the Management Board and comments by MS and COM were received. Likewise, the DPO has been heavily involved in the main features for expanding PeDRA, in particular on transmission to MSs, expanding the data collection, the anonymization of personal data and the collection of data of persons who cross the external border without authorisation.

Heavy involvement in the Crime Information Cell, in particular drafting its terms of reference, the SOP for the processing of personal data, the communication of the pilot vis-à-vis the European Data Protection Supervisor, and the reporting templates.

The DPO has been heavily involved in the exchange of information with Europol, which led to formal consultation with the EDPS on the possibility of receiving personal data from the European Police Office. The outcome of the Opinion was negative.

The DPO actively participated in meetings, drafted documents for the amendment of the new data protection regulation in order to be able to use the Police Cooperation Chapter for the purposes defined under Article 47 of the Frontex Regulation.

Finally, the DPO has raised awareness, in particular through a specific dedicated training delivered by Maastricht University, on the new Data Protection Regulation applicable to EU institutions.

2.14. Governance

Finance and corporate services

Highlights: Finance and corporate services in 2018

From a financial management perspective, BFCS contributed significantly to achieving efficiency gains in 2018 by implementing a simplified grants in close cooperation with ORD, which led to a reduction in the number of grants by 73% (from 1824 to 499).

Budget management and financial governance contributed to keeping up Agency's full scale operations through the verification of 3,153 commitments amounting to close to EUR 384m (budget 2018 and anticipated budget 2019). The budget transfer management was enhanced by the budget team and the introduction of a budgetary correspondents function in the entities rendered budgetary management and reporting more efficient.

Another significant BFCS's achievement in 2018 was the opening for use of five fully-furnished new office floors (5,000 sqm, 23% of total Agency's office space) with 325 new workstations. Continued support was provided to existing staff, newcomers and contractors throughout the year, amounting to more than 800 workstations being managed at the end of 2018. Each newcomer was provided with a stationery set. Additionally, the introduction of a control system led to significantly higher efficiency of office supplies' use. As part of caring for the staff wellbeing and facilities uninterrupted operation of the canteen, kitchenettes and cleaning service were guaranteed. Also, the necessary repair and maintenance programs of both buildings' facilities were ensured.

To facilitate the growing cooperation and exchange with external stakeholders more than 5,800 meetings were supported with more than 24,000 visitors registered. Over 5,500 parcels were handled. More than 500 training events on myFX were provided as part of the rollout of the document management system. Effective support was provided to the expatriate staff, including direct assistance in almost 1,500 cases and 75 expatriate services information mailings, the latter for the use of all staff.

BFCS enabled all Agency's entities to perform duties related to travel with nearly 4,000 mission orders processed, followed by a similar amount of claims.

On 24 May 2018, Frontex hosted more than 600 participants (European border and coast guards from more than 30 countries, as well as representatives of ministries and local authorities) at the European Border and Coast Guard Day organised by Budget, Finance and Corporate Services Unit (BFCS) and several other entities of the

Agency. Every year the EBCG Day provides a platform for sharing best practices in the field of border control and exchanging views between key border-management players. For the first time in the event's nine-year history, EBCG Day 2018 was organised outside Warsaw, in the Polish town of Sopot. Following the official conference, participants witnessed a spectacular maritime exercise conducted by the Polish Border Guard.

Human resources and security

Highlights: Human resources and security in 2018

- Successful management of all related HR activities, namely in areas of rights and entitlement of staff, learning and staff development (*including newcomers induction programme and leadership and management development programme*);
- Launch of 56 new recruitment procedures;
- Filling of 187 vacant posts (TAs, CAs and SNEs), including 13 posts of Directors, Heads of Units, Heads of Task Forces and Heads of Sectors;
- Management of Frontex *Traineeship programme with 30 positions filled during spring and autumn intake*;
- Management of Frontex Interims programme with 40 positions *filled during the year*;
- Successful implementation of the concept of HR Business Partners;
- Arrangement was signed for sharing EU classified information *between the General Secretariat of the Council, the European Commission, and European External Action Service, on the one part, and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, on the other*.
- Physical security risk assessment for B-Building and incorporation in refurbishment planning;
- Start up and elaboration of *travel security advice for Frontex staff*;
- Recruitments for Security Sector *with 6 posts filled*.

(detailed data and figures available in point 4.7)

Information and communication technology

Highlights: Information and communication technology in 2018

Support of the further development of Frontex Application for Return (FAR) and Frontex Application for Return - Return by Scheduled Flights (FAR RSF)

During 2018, the FAR Charters application has been maintained and developed further with 11 new releases covering 215 new requirements, including the development of a software interface in order to allow the Member States' return systems have the direct connection with FAR Charters. Major improvements covered Finance Module, Monitors Pool, Escort Pool, Passenger List Overbooking and Family Cluster, new role of Escort Leader. The FAR RSF application has been maintained with over 200 tickets solved and further developed with 7 new releases covering 120 new requirements. Major improvements covered the interfaces with the travel agency's IT systems.

New version of Eurosur

After 8 years of operation the user interface of the Eurosur application was refurbished following the outcomes of the prior security analysis that recommended replacement of an obsolete software component no longer supported by its maker, Google. This required a major overhaul of the user interface and related parts of the Eurosur application that included introduction of a dashboard feature, rationalisation and optimisation of the look and feel of the interface improving its aesthetics and the user experience. This task was carried out in continuous consultation with the volunteering MSs (NO, BG, GR). The new interface has since served as a design pattern for other Frontex software developments such as Opera Evo and Vulnerability Assessment Platform Data Collection Module. The application was extended to widen the support to the browsers requested by MSs – in effect four most popular browsers for Linux and Windows can be used to access the application. In total, one major release and three minor patch releases were deployed in 2018, further improving and solidifying the Eurosur application.

Consolidation of SAS (Statistical Analysis Software) solution

In 2018, migration of SAS solution was planned and initiated, with the delivery of a consolidated SAS solution being in progress. As a final result of those activities overall reliability and performance of the solution will be improved, which will enable future extensions of the SAS solution. In parallel, support services for SAS solution have been procured and are currently delivered, facilitating smooth and reliable operations.

Delivery of data collection tool for Vulnerability Assessment (VA)

In Dec 2018, we delivered a new Vulnerability Assessment Data Collection Module which has been installed in the Eurosur nodes at all Members States and Schengen associated countries. This solution provides each country with a central point to provide answers to the baseline assessment questionnaire at the EU restricted level.

Delivery of analysis tools

Operational data analysis tools were delivered in the end of 2018, aiming to consume data contained in all Eurosur layers (including JORA events) of the Frontex Eurosur Communication Network (ECN) node. The data are stored in a data warehouse system, can be processed with the integrated business intelligence, Geographical Information System (GIS) and document analysis software. Reports produced through the system, can be scheduled, triggered and shared with selected Eurosur users, also in the Member States, of the Analysis tools web portal.

Digital signature

In July 2018, we have deployed the components of electronic signature which allowed us to execute a pilot implementation of a number of signing and sealing mechanisms. These mechanisms will be integrated into existing workflows gradually throughout 2019.

Tender for Opera

On the 18 Dec 2018 we have signed the framework contract for the development of ICT software solution for the management of Frontex operational resources – Opera system. This contract will provide us with four incremental releases of the new Opera System across two years.

Tender for a framework contract for the further development, the maintenance and the support of Eurosur)

The two-year end-to-end work to secure a new framework contract for Eurosur was successfully completed and it resulted in signing of a new EUR 12M contract. It entered into force on 30 July 2018 and it is expected to cover Frontex's needs until 2022.

ICT support performance statistics for 2018:

Total number of service requests and incidents created in 2018: 27 441 (in comparison to 2017: 21 325, growth of 29%)

- Total number of incidents created in 2018: 3 471 (which is 13% of all registered requests)
- The average number of service requests and tickets created in 2018 daily: 125 (rounded)

Total number of service requests and incidents completed in 2018: 27 306 (in comparison to 2017: 20 947, growth of 30%)

- Total number of incidents completed in 2018: 3 437 (which is 13% of all registered requests)
- The average number of service requests and tickets completed in 2018 daily: 124 (rounded)

Percentage of service requests and incidents completed in 2018 within agreed SLAs and SLS: 90%

- Percentage of service requests and incidents completed in 2018 within agreed SLAs: 91%
- Percentage of service requests and incidents completed in 2018 within agreed SLS: 90%

Total number of infrastructure changes created in 2018: 217 (in comparison to 2017: 149, grow of 46%)

Total number of infrastructure changes completed in 2018: 141 (in comparison to 2017: 181, drop of 22%)

User-related projects completed:

- upgrade of the end users workstations operating system from Windows 7 to Windows 10: 93% office workstations completed;
- replacement of the audio video conferencing infrastructure components and deployment of the new audio video terminals (12) in HQ and operational areas;
- replacement (16 new multifunctional devices) and extension (14 additional multifunctional devices) of the printing fleet together with implementation of the new print management solution;
- extension of the EU RESTRICTED network by implementing the end points management solution (SCCM) together with an increase and replacement of the obsolete end-users equipment (100 new workstations);
- migration of the users from the legacy EU RESTRICTED network to the new one: 74% completed (91 out of 123);
- extension of the audio video projection infrastructure for the purposes of the MAS project (new high resolution wide displays);
- implementing dual boot, UNCLASSIFIED/EU RESTRICTED workstation solution to limit the number of distributed workstations;
- deployment of the IT infrastructure for Liaison Officers in remote offices in Sofia, Budapest, Stockholm and Bratislava;
- support for the AFIC projects: proposal and assessment of the IT equipment purchased from grants as well as the support of the external AFIC trainings;
- support of the Internet connection for the Crime Information Cell (CIC) project on vessels.

ICT has successfully completed the upgrade and migration of e-mail communication solution (Microsoft Exchange Server).

Further development of myFX, with the release of HowTo and HydePark.

Legal affairs

Highlights: Legal affairs in 2018

2018 has been a busy year for the Legal Services Sector (LEG) of the Legal and Procurement Unit (LPU). Not in the least given that LEG merged with the Procurement Team (previously part of BFCS Unit) on 1.1.2018 and together now form LPU. As such, LEG continued to be involved in an increasing amount of legal issues connected to procurement procedures and contract management issues.

However, LEG also became increasingly busy in its support to core business practitioners (e.g. regarding border management/Justice and Home Affairs/Schengen Acquis). For instance, in light of increasing numbers of requests for legal support) LEG has further developed its dedicated internal team providing legal support to the Agency's various operational Divisions/Units, and entities (LEG.OPS). As such, LEG continued to be highly active in reviewing and contributing to the drafting and signature of various operational plans, memoranda of understanding on the deployment of Frontex Liaison Officers to Member States and to third countries, status agreements with multiple third countries (e.g. Albania, Montenegro and FYROM), supporting the establishment of the ETIAS Central Unit, revising the Code of Conduct for Return Operations and Return Interventions coordinated or organised by Frontex, and more.

Furthermore, again in light of continuously increasing number of requests for legal support, LEG further developed its dedicated internal team providing legal support to the Agency's non-operational Divisions/Units, and entities (LEG.GOV). As such, LEG continued to be highly active in carrying out quality control reviews of internal decision-making processes (e.g. legally reviewing draft Executive Director's and Management Board Decisions), other MB-related work, reviewing detailed amendments to the existing lease for office space in the Warsaw Spire building, assisting with the extension of the free loan agreement for the EUTF premises in Catania, supporting the implementation of the Headquarters Agreement between the Republic of Poland and Frontex, taking over the IRMA platform from the European Commission, concluding lightweight arrangements for the exchange of classified information with Schengen-associated countries, and more.

Moreover, in 2018 LEG organised a LEGNET meeting for national border management officers/lawyers and for six months successfully chaired the Interagency Legal Network (IALN) for EU agency and joint undertaking lawyers.

In addition, LEG continued to be responsible for the handling of complaints lodged against Frontex at the European Ombudsman (with no findings of maladministration), and the increasing amount of applications for public access to documents (thereby also managing sensitive operational data). Furthermore, it continued to successfully represent Frontex in court cases both before the EU General Court and national courts. In this sense, LEG has achieved a 100% success rate with all court cases won between 2017 and 2018, and also recovered costs incurred in litigation proceedings.

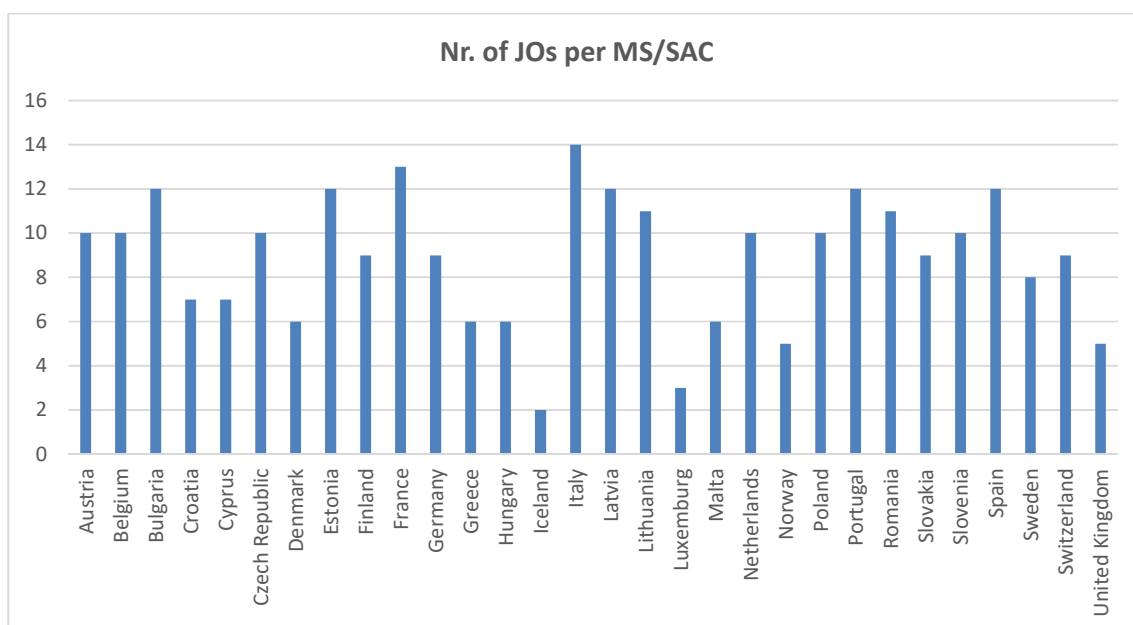
PROC achievements in 2018 are included at 4.4 point of this annual report.

3. Key results and progress towards the achievement of objectives of Frontex

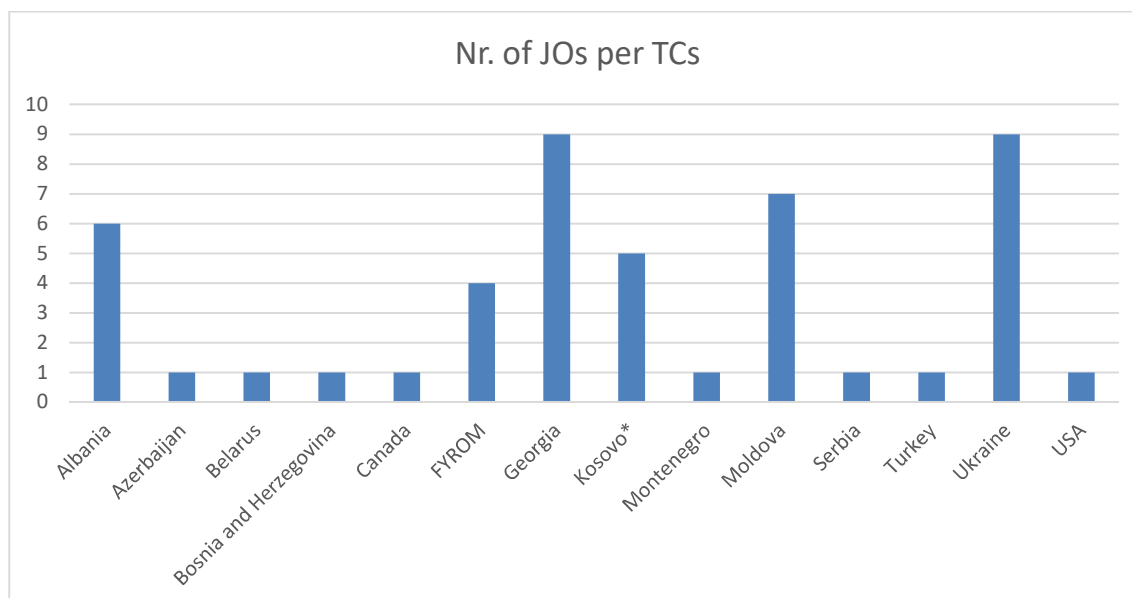
3.1. Key performance indicators

The most relevant operation key performance indicators.

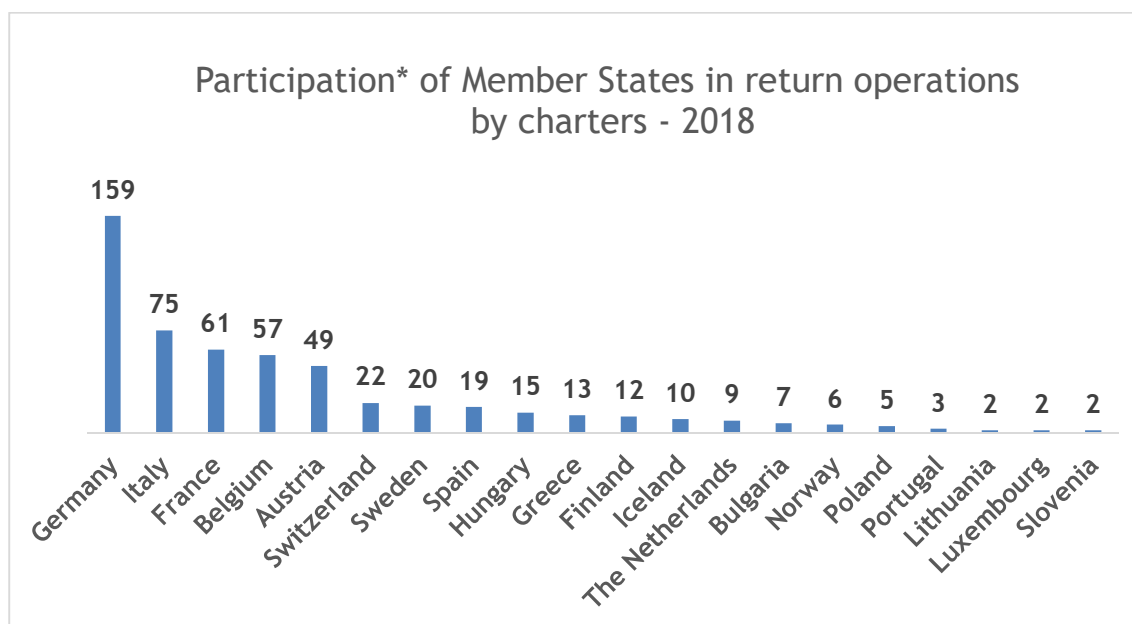
| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Description of indicator | <i>In 2018, the number of Member States participating in operational activities should remain at the same level as in 2017.</i> |
| Target | A total of 30 Member States and Schengen associated countries participated in operational activities in 2018. |



The overview shows that during 2018, all Member States and Schengen associated countries participated in at least one joint operation. In that respect the target set was reached.



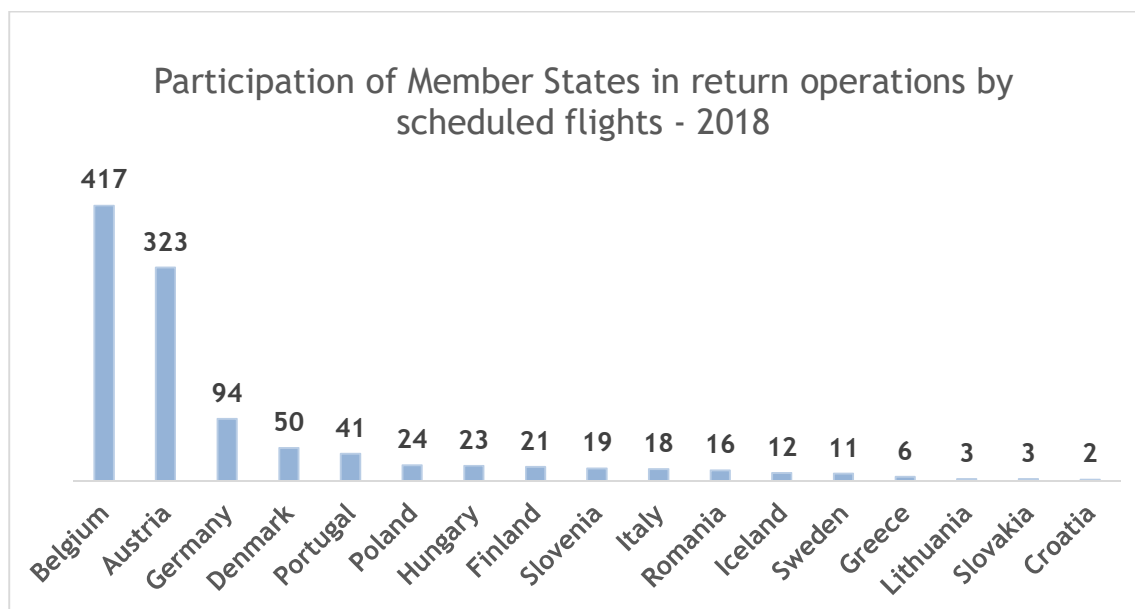
In 2018, a total of 14 third countries at least once participated in Frontex operations. Ukraine and Georgia were the most active third countries and participated in 9 operations, followed by Moldova (7), Albania (6) and Kosovo⁷(5).



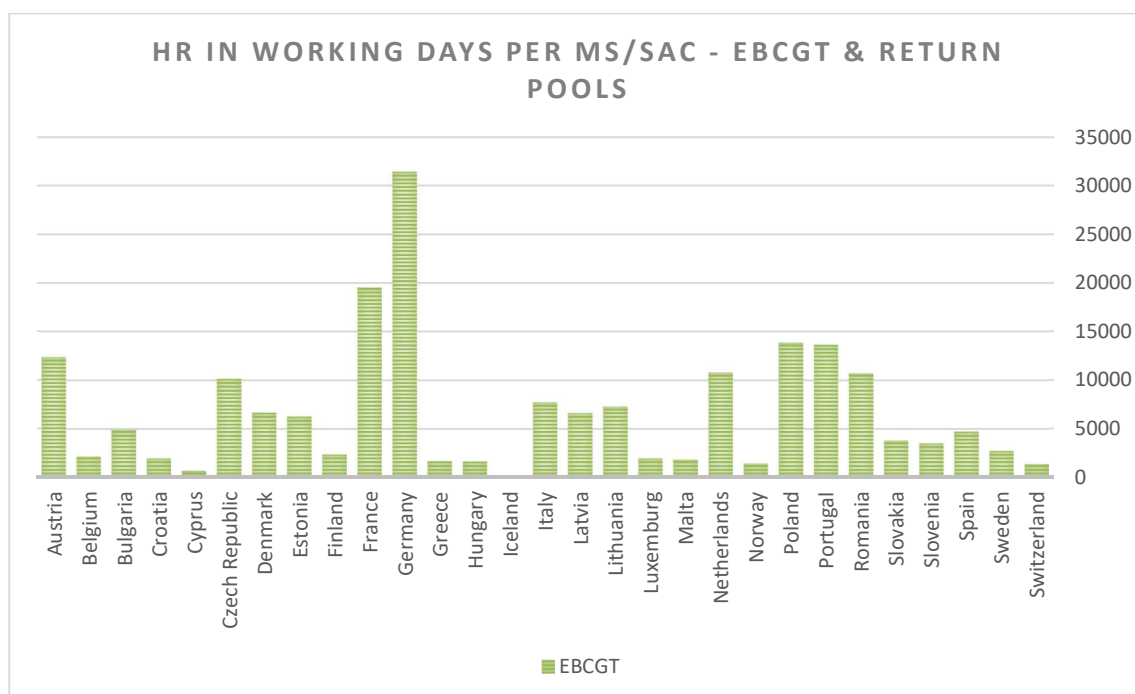
*both as organising as well as participating Member States

In 2018, 20 Member States took part as an organiser or a participant in return operations coordinated and co-financed by Frontex. Overall, in 2018, Member States handed over 12,245 returnees and reached 38 third countries of return. While the number of return operations organised by Member States remained almost unchanged compared with 2017, the figures show a significant decrease in the number of third-country nationals returned in 2018 (almost 14%).

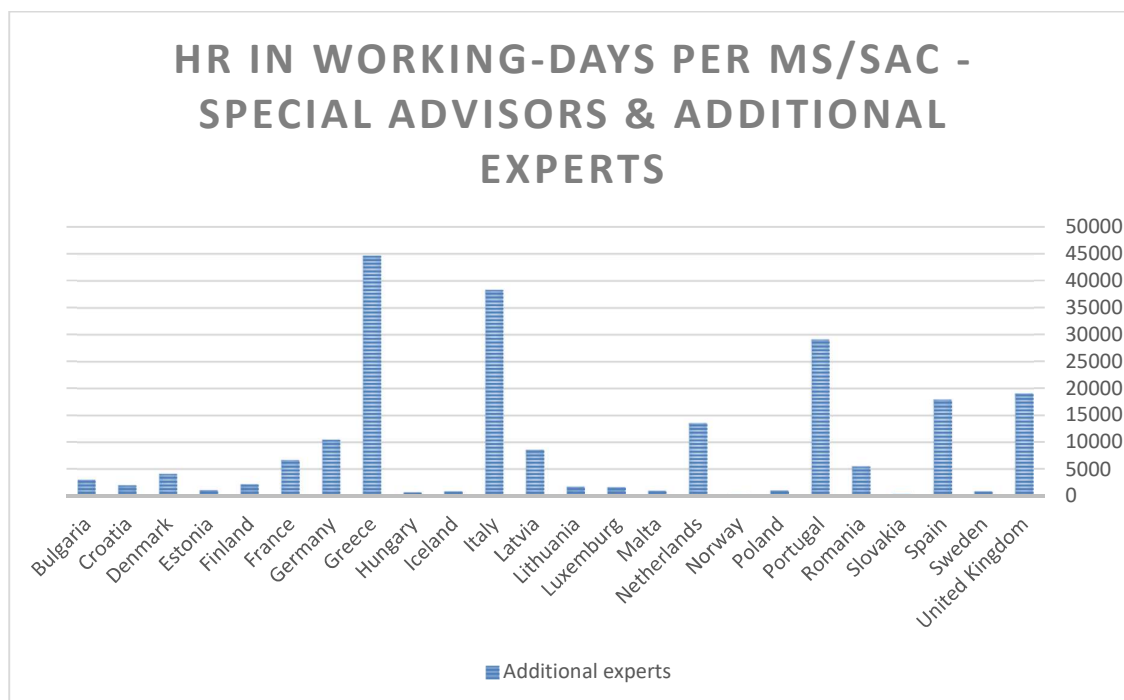
⁷ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.



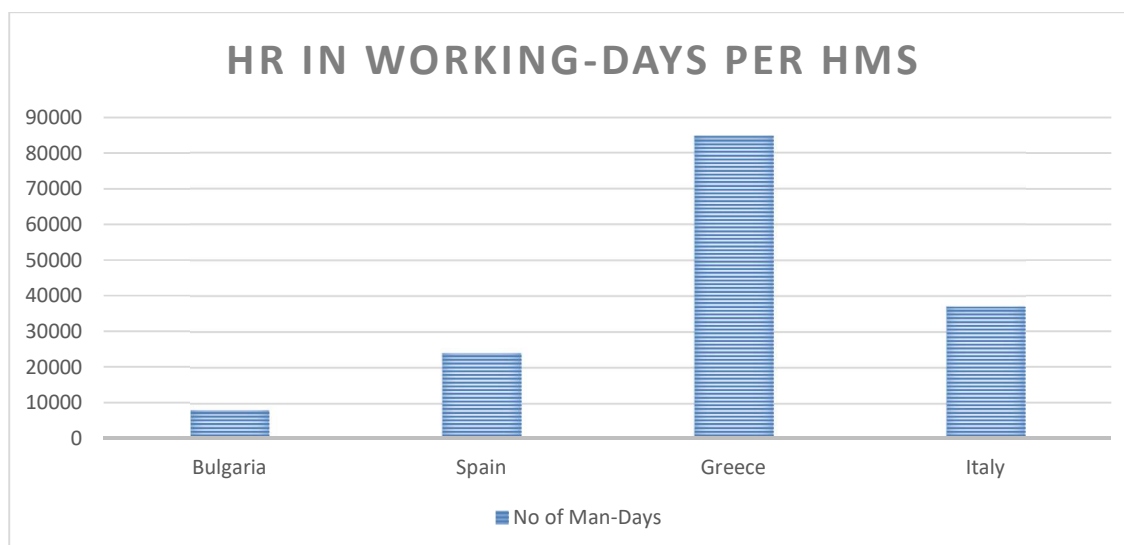
Throughout 2018 the pilot project for returns by scheduled flights made a substantial contribution to the continuous efforts to assist Member States in the implementation of returns and proved to exceed performance goals. Seventeen Member States performed return operations by scheduled flights reaching 49 destinations. In 1,083 operations a total of 1,477 third country nationals were brought to their respective countries.



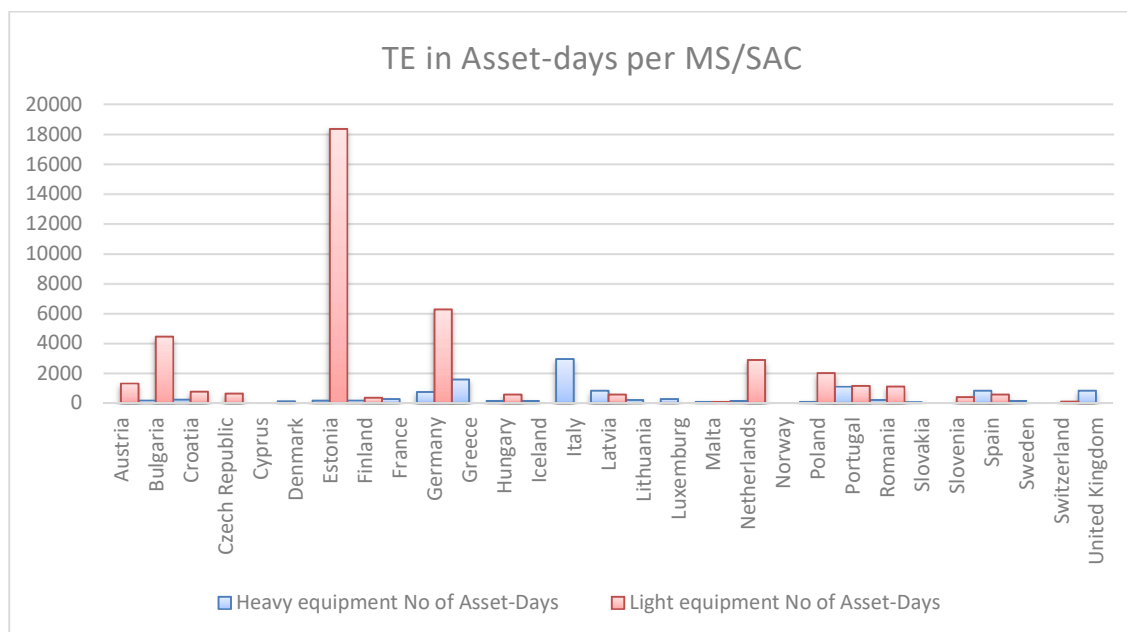
In terms of deployment of the European Border and Coast Guard team members and return pools experts, the top three MS contributing with the highest number of working days was Germany, France and Poland. The host Member States (Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Spain) contributed to almost 10% to the overall number of EBCGT & return pools working days of experts' deployed in Frontex's operations. Out of 29 MS/SAC countries, 8 contributed to more than 10,000 working days in this category of deployments profiles. The total contribution in this category amounted to 193,039 working days.



The above chart on special advisors and additional experts deployed in operational activities (joint operations) needs to be read together with the one below as this shows that two hosting Member States (Greece and Italy) are still the main providers of human resources in joint operations. In terms of special advisors and additional experts, Greece and Italy was followed by Portugal, the United Kingdom and Spain. In comparison to 2017, there was a significant increase in the contribution provided in working days in operational areas by the top five countries. However, due to this increase the contributions from other hosting Members States are no longer as balanced as in 2017. Out of 24 MS/SAC countries, the top five countries' contribution amounts to over 70% of the overall number of working days in this category.

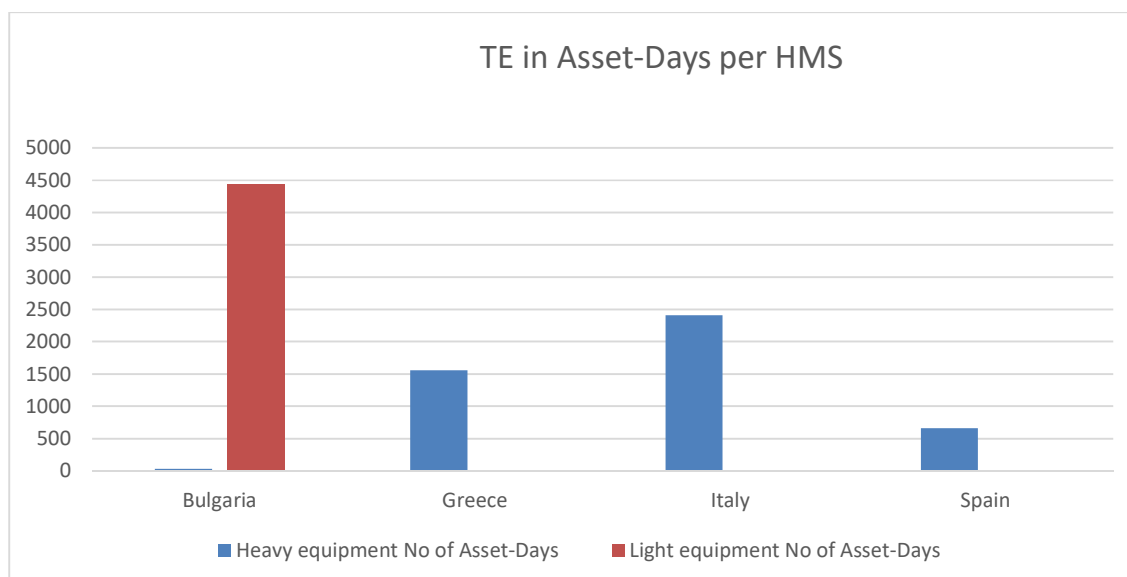


The high level of contribution from host Member States can also be seen in the internal deployments of human resources (in working days) deployed in Frontex operations. Overall, the internal deployments of host Member States amount to more than 33% of overall number of working days of human resources deployed in 2018.



As regards the deployment of technical equipment, the same tendency from 2017 can be identified. In 2018, the contributions from participating Member States have started to outpace the level of contributions from hosting Member States. At the current stage and based on the tools at the full disposal of the Agency (own equipment) but also considering the level of resource utilisation in the participating Member States a full replacement of resources provided by the hosting Member State is not achievable.

The contribution of Estonia – almost 96% of asset-day contribution in terms of providing portable light technical equipment (CO₂ detectors, heartbeat detectors and other small equipment) was particularly remarkable when compared with other MS/SAC.⁸ On the other hand, Italy provided the highest contribution in terms of heavy technical equipment.



Bulgaria remains the biggest contributor in respect of providing patrol.

Financial indicators

⁸ This number is excluding Frontex's own portable technical equipment deployments in 2018.

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Description of indicator | <i>Provision of budget-related and financial services; Provision of miscellaneous corporate services including travel services; Development and implementation of the new premises project;</i> |
| Target | Prepared and submitted timely; monitoring provided; compliance with the regulatory framework; high level of satisfaction |

Budget, planning, monitoring, coordinating and reporting on provisional and voted budget was efficiently performed. With regard to the discharge procedure, the support to external auditors was provided and all replies to the external auditors were timely submitted. The discharge procedure was properly prepared, all mandatory and additionally requested documents were submitted to the discharge authorities on time.

Regarding provision of financial services, the compliance with the regulatory framework was ensured. All transactions were timely introduced into ABAC and the revenue was timely collected. The decentralised financial initiation was supported by the unit in complex areas. For the part of financial initiation centralised in BFCS over 400 payments from multiple budget lines and compensation payments were executed, and over 80 recovery orders initiated. All commitment transactions as well as all payment transactions exceeding EUR 5,000 threshold were verified.

The end-of-year procedure was steered and implemented under the guidance of the financial verifiers without any delays.

The unit also provided tailor-made training on ABAC and the expenditure lifecycle:

- Three 2-day ABAC training sessions for Financial Initiators were provided, the level of satisfaction was at 84%;
- Six iterations of the ELC training were conducted;
- 22 individual sessions for newly appointed Authorizing Officers by delegation or sub-delegation, based on the feedback received, the satisfaction level is satisfactory.

Facility management enabled five fully furnished new office floors (5 000 sqm, 23% of total Agency's office space) with 325 new workstations, more than 800 workstations managed at year's end.

Administrative support for meetings and conferences allowed for the organisation of 5,809 meetings.

Reception registered 24,028 visitors and handled 5 683 parcels.

Expatriate services provided assistance in 1492 cases and sent 75 info mailings for the use of all staff; a satisfactory survey conducted revealed a highly appreciative evaluation of Expatriate Services with more than 90% of positive responses.

Library was continuously available, office supplies were timely provided to all staff, administrative ad hoc support was safeguarded.

Efficient management of corporate travel including the financial aspects of planning, managing and reimbursement of mission costs to staff members and STMs was ensured with close to 4,000 mission orders processed, followed by a similar amount of claims.

Booking of missions and reimbursements was done in timely manner. A survey conducted in December 2018 showed a satisfaction level of 93%. Thanks to the efficient management of bonus programmes, the negotiated discounts for flight tickets in 2018 were between 5-25% depending on the bonus programmes with airlines.

The preparation of the plot of land for the new premises took place. In accordance with the Headquarters Agreement of 9th March 2017, the Ministry of Interior ensured cleaning and clearing of the site, in cooperation with Frontex. Works included demolition of several destitute buildings and remnants of old structures and were accomplished before the end of 2018.

The Head of Permanent Premises Task Force to manage the project was recruited and took up duties at the beginning of 2019.

3.2. Key conclusions on management and internal control

Frontex conducts its operations in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations, working in an open and transparent manner and meeting the expected high level of professional and ethical standards.

Frontex adopted a set of internal control standards, based on international good practice, aimed at ensuring the achievement of its objectives. The financial regulation requires that the organisational structure and the internal control systems used for the implementation of the budget are set up in accordance with these standards.

In 2018, an ongoing review of the internal control system and organisational performance provided reasonable assurance to Frontex's management as to the level of compliance with all internal controls, on the correct functioning of the systems in place and on organisational performance. The review highlighted the main strengths and the potential weaknesses of the systems in place and supported the establishment of an improvement action plan.

In 2018, Frontex took measures to improve the efficiency of its internal control systems. Such measures need to be put in perspective with the ongoing implementation of the new and extended mandate, the significant increase in staff and the resulting overhaul of the organisational structure. Those undertakings are certainly challenging the steadfast implementation of control measures due to an extended 'learning curve'.

Nevertheless,

- Risk management and processes (ICS 8 Processes and Procedures, ICS 11 Document management and ICS 12 Information and communication), but also
- Leadership (ICS 9 Management supervision, ICS 15 Assessment of the internal control system) remained at a high level of efficiency.

People management (ICS 3 Staff Allocation and Mobility) and ICS 7 Operational Structure were assessed for 2018 as requiring major improvements. Following reorganisation of the Frontex structure adopted by the Management Board in June 2017, both areas were covered by development projects aimed at increasing effectiveness of the controls. Results have been obtained along 2018 on these areas, particularly regarding ICS 7. Frontex new internal structure has solidified and further enhanced through the development of a comprehensive internal working framework, Executive Director Decision R-2018-191 on Frontex's Internal Structure and Rules of Procedure (FISRoP).

In October 2018, an updated methodology to register exceptions and non-compliance events in line with ICP-12 Complementary Guidance on Management and Non-compliance Events was introduced through ED Decision R-2018-102.

In addition, Frontex has systematically examined the available control results and indicators, including those aimed at supervising entities to which it has entrusted budget implementation tasks, as well as the observations and recommendations issued by the Internal Audit Service and the European Court of Auditors. These elements have been assessed to determine their impact on the management's assurance as regards the achievement of control objectives.

In conclusion, Frontex management has reasonable assurance that Frontex has continued to implement a comprehensive system of internal controls, performance and results-oriented management embedding risk management and ensuring a proportional approach to compliance and effectiveness of internal procedures and systems. The necessary improvements and reinforcements have been implemented and the Executive Director, in his capacity as the Authorising Officer, has signed the Declaration of Assurance.

Nevertheless, Frontex recognises that given the substantial increase in Frontex's resources (human and financial) and the implementation of the extended tasks and responsibilities that are assigned to Frontex, the internal control system must be further strengthened and improved in 2019.

4. Budgetary and financial management

All expenditure is implemented in the form of centralised management. As a general rule, the Agency uses the financial circuit model 3 ‘decentralised circuit with central counterweight’, where the operational initiation and verification functions, as well as the financial initiation function, are executed within each division. The ex-ante financial verification is centrally performed by the Financial Services within the Financial and Corporate Services Unit under Corporate Governance.

Four different circuits have been identified in Frontex: a standard circuit, a simplified circuit for commitments, a simplified circuit for payments and a mission circuit as explained below:

- For commitments below EUR 5000, a simplified circuit is followed, where the operational verification function is performed by the authorising officer (by delegation or by sub-delegation).
- For payments below EUR 5000, a simplified circuit is followed, where both operational and financial verification functions are performed by the authorising officer (by delegation or by sub-delegation).
- For missions, the operational and financial initiation function is performed centrally by the staff in the Corporate Travel Services within Budget, Financial and Corporate Services Unit; the operational and financial verification functions are performed by the relevant authorising officer (by delegation or sub-delegation).
- For all remaining transactions a standard circuit is followed where the functions of operational verification, financial verification and the functions of the authorising officer (or authorising officer by delegation or sub-delegation) are separated.

The system of delegations and deputising in Frontex respects the following principles:

- Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director are entitled to sign all transactions for all amounts and all budget lines.
- Delegations are granted by the Executive Director to: division directors and heads of entities outside divisions. The delegated authorising officers may propose to further sub-delegate to the heads of units, heads of sectors and other selected staff. The sub-delegation is in force when countersigned by the Executive Director. For commitment transactions different financial thresholds apply to these delegations and sub-delegations depending on the level of responsibility of the delegated or sub-delegated AO (as a general rule: Director - 1.000.000 EUR, for the heads of unit - 500.000 EUR, for heads of sector - 200.000 EUR, for team leaders 50.000 EUR. There is no financial threshold set for payments. In 2018, the total number of delegations of authorising officers’ powers was 11, while 52 sub-delegations were in place.
- Deputising/*Suppléances*: As a general rule, deputising is performed downwards; which means that the heads of units replace directors and that heads of sectors replace heads of units; when heads of sectors are absent, they are replaced by team leaders. In all cases when deputising for an AO by delegation or sub-delegated, the rights of the absent actor are given to the ‘acting’ AO by delegation or sub-delegation.

4.1. Implementation of appropriations

Table 1. Summary overview of 2018 implementation per fund source

| Fund source | Budget | Total commitments ⁽¹⁾ | | Total payments ⁽¹⁾ | |
|---|--------------------|----------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------|-----|
| C1 Regular budget | 288 663 520 | 283 972 546 | 98% | 201 167 729 | 70% |
| C4 Internal assigned revenue | 2 917 023 | 1 339 393 | 46% | 898 989 | 31% |
| C5 Internal assigned revenue carry over | 371 234 | 335 434 | 90% | 215 239 | 58% |
| C8 Automatic carry over | 88 416 033 | 77 809 146 | 88% | 77 809 146 | 88% |
| Sub-total: | 380 367 810 | 363 456 519 | 96% | 280 091 103 | 74% |
| R0 Earmarked expenditure | 25 926 099 | 20 239 754 | 78% | 13 225 167 | 51% |
| Total: | 406 293 909 | 383 696 273 | | 293 316 270 | |

The initial adopted budget of EUR 320.2 million was amended two times, resulting in the final budget of EUR 288.7 million.

In 2018, 98% of the C1 appropriations were committed and 70% were paid. Final implementation of the 2018 budget led to a cancellation of EUR 4.7 million out of which 81% (EUR 3.8 million) comes from staff expenditure. This amount was kept until the end of the year considering the pending decision on the social measures. Committed but not yet paid appropriations of EUR 83.4 million from 2018 budget were carried forward to 2019 (29%). These commitments will be paid during 2019 with the final delivery of the goods or services or the completion of operational activities. The funds automatically carried over from 2017 amounted to EUR 88.4 million (32%). Significant amount of the funds carried forward that amounted to EUR 69.1 million (83%) was related to Title 3 of the budget – operational expenditure with EUR 38.9 million for joint operations, and EUR 15.5 m for return operations. EUR 13.5 million (16%) of the funds carried forward concern Title 2 – administrative expenditure, out of which EUR 6.5 million was related to ICT contracts and EUR 5.5 m related to the rental costs of the building and associated expenditure. At the end of December 2018, the payment level reached 88%. As much as EUR 10.6 million were not paid and had to be cancelled. In total, 93% of the cancellations come from Title 3: EUR 4.5 million from joint operations, EUR 2 m from return operations, EUR 1.8 million from research and innovation, EUR 0.6 million from training and EUR 0.5 million from pooled resources.

Internal assigned revenue (the amounts reimbursed from the funds used from Frontex regular budget (C1) voted by the budgetary authority) amounted to EUR 2.9 million (C4), 46% was committed and the rest was carried over as C5 funds. Recovery orders which were carried over from 2017 (C5) amounted to EUR 0.4 million, 90% of which was committed and the rest was cancelled.

Table 2. Table 2. Regular budget (C1) implementation per budgetary title

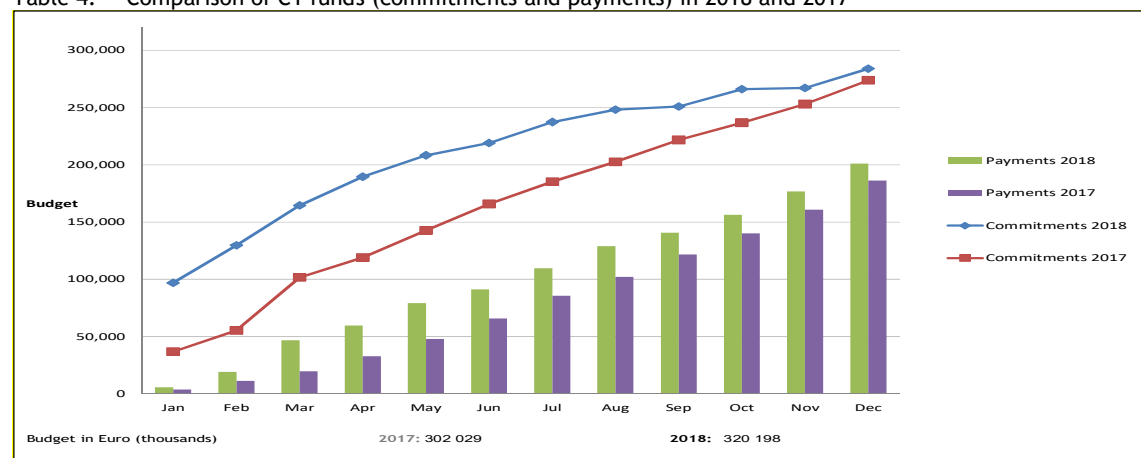
| Title | | Budget | Total committed | | Total payments | |
|-------|----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
| | | A | B | C=B/A | D | E=D/A |
| A-1 | Staff | 44 369 000 | 40 560 809 | 91% | 39 803 616 | 90% |
| A-2 | Other administrative expenditure | 29 902 352 | 29 602 092 | 99% | 16 147 540 | 54% |
| A-3 | Operational activities | 214 392 168 | 213 809 644 | 100% | 145 216 574 | 68% |
| | | 288 663 520 | 283 972 545 | 98% | 201 167 730 | 70% |

Table 3. Performance comparison of the budgetary year 2018 versus 2017

| | 2018 | 2017 |
|---|------|------|
| Commitments C1 | 98% | 98% |
| Payments C1 | 70% | 66% |
| Funds carried forward to the following year | 29% | 32% |
| Funds cancelled | 1.6% | 2.4% |

The budget implementation was stable throughout 2018, the same observation as for the previous year. The overall percentage level of commitments remained the same as last year (98%), and for payments it increased to 70%. The percentage of funds carried forward from 2018 to 2019 was 29%, and 2% of the budget appropriations had to be cancelled.

Table 4. Comparison of C1 funds (commitments and payments) in 2018 and 2017



4.2. Information on transfers and amending budgets

In the course of 2018 two amending budgets were approved by the Management Board decreasing Frontex's initial budget by EUR 31.5 million. On 12 October 2018, the Management Board adopted the third amendment to the programming document 2018–2020 along with amending budget number 1 which decreased Frontex's budget by EUR 28.9 million. In agreement with the European Commission, EUR 27 million were returned to the EU budget and entered into the global transfer within the Commission.

The main reasons behind this decrease in the budget are the following:

- EUR 10.5 m from staff related expenditures due to the difficulties in reaching the full occupancy of the establishment plan. The low correction coefficient applicable to the seat of the Agency located in Warsaw is a crucial factor for speeding up recruitments and retaining the staff;
- In agreement with the European Commission, 75% of the financial operational reserve (Article 75–13 of Frontex's Regulation) amounting to EUR 7.1 million was released;
- EUR 5 million of savings in return and operational response. Moderate flows of migrants in several border sections in 2018 and substantial cancellations of technical equipment and human resources' deployments resulted in lower overall level of deployments, consequently lower costs. As regards return operations, the initial budget proved to be over-estimated for some Member States. Overall the increasing budget of the Agency proves to be sufficient to cover operational activities.
- EUR 2.5 million from administrative expenditures as the budget for the building project and supporting activities for the development of the new Frontex's Headquarters was not needed in 2018. Such an important construction project required first to recruit the Head of task force and its specialised staff in charge of the definition of the architectural terms and reference and preparation of the public procurement.

On 12 December 2018, the Management Board adopted the fifth amendment to the programming Document 2018–2020, along with the amending budget number 2, which decreased Frontex's budget by EUR 2.5 million. In agreement with the European Commission, EUR 2.37 million were returned to the EU budget.

In line with the agreement with the Commission, the purpose of this amending budget was to return the remaining 25% of the financial operational reserve amounting to EUR 2.37 million following the assessment of the current operational situation which indicated a very low likelihood of an event that would trigger the use of those resources before the end of the year.

Following the budget implementation reviews performed on a quarterly basis, eight budget transfers were approved by the Executive Director in 2018. In addition, during the end-of-the-year financial processes, three transfers were approved in December in order to ensure the best allocation and use of the resources. In total, transfers amounted to EUR 34 million. Only 8 budget transfers were approved during the year following the implementation of quarterly budget reviews, compared to 17 transfers in 2017 (EUR 37.3 million) and 19 in 2016 (EUR 17 million).

The transfers in Title 1 amounted to EUR 6.5 million where redistribution of funds was needed due to an increase in other external services, supplementary clerical services, other recruitment costs and the initially foreseen appropriations for family, expatriation, installation and daily allowances were not sufficient.

The transfers in Title 2 amounted to EUR 4.4 m, where redistribution of funds was necessary mainly due to the increased ICT needs (purchase of new ICT equipment for newcomers, new software licenses, purchase of consultancy service for the development of tools in SharePoint for Field Deployment Unit, Intranet and Document Management System), additional unforeseen meetings, rent and miscellaneous facility management costs and additional security equipment.

The transfers in Title 3 amounted to EUR 23.2 m, covering mainly the following needs:

- the shift of escort officers management costs from return operations to joint operations;
- additional funding for joint operations to cover increased heavy technical equipment deployments from Member States in the third quarter;
- acquisition of additional Aerial Surveillance Services within the FASS framework contract, mobile office deployment, bus and ferry transportation for readmissions;
- additional training provided to Member States following a higher than expected involvement in some topics;

- amendment of FX/OP/800/2017/JL Lot 2, prolongation of the contract duration, due to the delay in the implementation of the trial of the small MALE Remotely Piloted Aircraft System;
- funding for emerging projects and pilot projects such as biometric on the move, maritime analysis tool, and others;
- additional meetings and workshops.

Table 5. Budget transfers in 2018

| # | Description | Transaction number | Date | Title 1 - Staff expenditure | Title 2 - Other Administrative expenditure | Title 3 - Operational expenditure |
|---|----------------------|--------------------|----------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | Transfer Decision N1 | FRO.22345 | 27-04-18 | 5 688 000 | 824 000 | 6 261 170 |
| 2 | Transfer Decision N2 | FRO.22394 | 14-06-18 | 660 000 | 313 150 | 11 505 000 |
| 3 | Transfer Decision N3 | FRO.22445 | 20-08-18 | | 250 000 | 500 000 |
| 4 | Transfer Decision N4 | FRO.22488 | 02-10-18 | 164 000 | 907 920 | 1 579 338 |
| 5 | Transfer Decision N5 | FRO.22563 | 04-12-18 | | 1 778 480 | 60 000 |
| 6 | Transfer Decision N6 | FRO.22614 | 17-12-18 | | 258 794 | |
| 7 | Transfer Decision N7 | FRO.22644 | 17-12-18 | | | 1 545 000 |
| 8 | Transfer Decision N8 | FRO.22673 | 19-12-18 | | 26 100 | 1 775 599 |

4.3. Implementation of appropriations from 2017 carried forward to 2018

The amount carried forward from 2017 to 2018 (C8 funds) amounted to EUR 88.4 m of which 88% was paid. The remaining 12% (EUR 10.6 million) had to be cancelled. As displayed by Table 6, in administrative matters where the Agency can have a better grip on the level of activities with less interference of external factors (e.g. correction coefficient, overestimation of operational expenditures by Member States), the rate of implementation of C8 funds reached 95%.

Table 6. Implementation of appropriations carried from 2017 to 2018

| Title | | Carried Forward | Total payments | | To be returned |
|-------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------|-------------------|
| | | A | D | E=D/A | |
| A-1 | Staff | 399 389 | 225 796 | 57% | 173 593 |
| A-2 | Other administrative expenditure | 10 926 265 | 10 406 672 | 95% | 519 593 |
| A-3 | Operational activities | 77 090 380 | 67 176 680 | 87% | 9 913 700 |
| | | 88 416 034 | 77 809 148 | 88% | 10 606 886 |

4.4. Procurement procedures

2018 has been a busy year for the Procurement Sector (PROC) of the Legal and Procurement Unit (LPU). Not in the least given that the Procurement Team merged with the (ex-) Legal Affairs Unit on 1.1.2018 and together now form LPU. As such, PROC became also more involved in legal questions which had a procurement and/or contract management element to it.

However, PROC also became increasingly busy in its more 'classical remits'. For instance, the amount of procurement procedures processed reached an all-time high level (1,581), leading to even more signed contracts with a total worth of over EUR 147 million.

Furthermore, PROC handled a number of particularly complex procedures requiring particular scrutiny/complex solutions, such as the first Frontex-led interinstitutional tender procedure (with EFCA) regarding the aerial surveillance framework contract.

At the same time, PROC has been working on improving related internal procedures, mainly by means of preparing for the partial automation of procurement workflows, and e-procurement (aimed at working paperless). For this reason, PROC conducted a study visit to the European Maritime Safety Agency in Lisbon

Also, LPU studied how to prepare for the concept of joint procurement with Member States, in good cooperation with PRU. Even though the concept is complicated and was still at a very preliminary phase of exploration, LPU examined how this could potentially take place and a relevant briefing note was prepared. To this end, it conducted a study visit to DG BUDG, and is contemplating the potential creation of a dedicated back office in PROC.

Furthermore, the Brexit implications in the procurement context were thoroughly assessed and analysed by PROC, which resulted in a briefing note for the Executive Management.

Finally, PROC processed a significant number of applications from (potential) external experts, resulting in a high number of contracts concluded therewith (125).

4.5. Late payments – interest paid to suppliers

The overall interest due to late payments (>30 days) amounted to EUR 966 in 2018. The amount included just the late payment charged by suppliers as according to the financial rules, interest for late payment is not due to Member states.

4.5. Negotiated procedures – point 11 – Annex I to Financial Regulation

| List of contracts awarded by Frontex in 2018 on the basis of point 11 of Annex I to the Financial Regulation – exceptional negotiated procedures | | | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|-------------|---|----------------|--------------|
| Contract number | Subject | Supplies /services | Budget line | Contractor | Signature date | Value in EUR |
| 420/2018 | Purchase and installation of programming stations | services | 2350 | Ghelamco Warsaw Spire Sp z oo sp kkomand-akcyjna ul. Wołoska 22 02-675 Warsaw, Poland | 21-05-18 | 17,925.50 |
| 673/2018 | Litigation assistance for case T-212-18 | services | 2330 | JULIAN RICHARD CURRALL 1000 Brussels, Belgium | 25-06-18 | 10,125.00 |
| 674/2018 | Litigation assistance and possible eventual representation at oral hearing for case T-212-18 | services | 2330 | RO RADWAN-ROHRENSCHEF, PETRUCZENKO, PIECHOTA SPOLKA KOMANDYTOWA ul. Nowogrodzka 11, 00-513 Warszawa, Poland | 20-06-18 | 12,600.00 |
| 794/2018 | LinkedIn subscription | services | 1203 | LinkedIn Ireland Unlimited Company Gardner House Wilton Place Dublin 2, Ireland | 11-07-18 | 18,000.00 |

| | | | | | | |
|----------|--|----------|------|---|----------|------------|
| 928/2018 | One year subscription to Military and Security Assessments Intelligence Centre | services | 3100 | IHS GLOBAL S.A. 24 Chemin de la Mairie PO Box 152, 1258 Perly-Geneva Switzerland | 24-08-18 | 114,709.00 |
|----------|--|----------|------|---|----------|------------|

4.6. Ad hoc grants and delegation agreements

External assigned revenue concerns funds that do not originate in voted EU appropriations for the agency, but that are received for the execution of specific contracts or agreements from external financing parties or from the European Commission DGs. According to the Financial Regulation, these appropriations cannot be mixed with others, therefore they are shown separately under Title 4 of Frontex's budget.

The appropriations corresponding to assigned revenue are made available automatically, both as commitment appropriations and as payment appropriations, once the revenue has been received by the Agency. External assigned revenue is carried over automatically and must be fully used by the time all the operations relating to the programme or action to which it is assigned have been carried out.

Frontex is currently running three grant agreements and one Delegation Agreement, all funded by the European Commission, as listed below.

- IPA II grant agreement 'Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey'. Grant signed on the 22 December 2015. Total budget EUR 5.5 million, implementation period of 42 months from 1/1/2016 following extension.
- IPA II Phase II grant agreement 'Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey' was signed on 10 December 2018 with a budget of 3.4 million to be implemented in 24 months from 1/7/2019.
- Grant agreement 'Strengthening of Africa – Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC) in the fight against organised crime and the smuggling of migrants' signed with the European Commission (DG International Cooperation and Development) on the 10 August 2017; budget of up to EUR 4.0 million for three years starting in September 2017.
- Delegation agreement on 'Copernicus 2015–2020' with the European Commission, represented by DG Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, signed on 10 November 2015, entrusting Frontex with the service component implementation tasks, in line with Regulation (EU) No 377/2014 establishing the Copernicus programme. The indicative budget amounts to EUR 47.6 million, implemented until 31 December 2020.
- Grant agreement 'Eastern partnership IBM' (regional capacity-building project), signed with the European Commission (DG International Cooperation and Development) on 20 June 2014 and terminated on 31/12/2018, with a budget of up to EUR 4.5 million.
- Grant agreement EU4Border Security signed on 7 November 2018 with the European Commission (DG Directorate-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations) (project for enhanced border security in the Southern Neighbourhood); budget of up to 4 million for 36 months from 1 December 2018.

4.7. Human resources management

4.7.1. Human resources developments

The year 2018 was the third one of the five-years of Frontex's growth, following the adoption of the new EBCG Regulation (1624/2016) that significantly increased resources in the area of budget and staff. To this end, the Agency continued to recruit additional personnel at higher rates (compared to the 'cruising levels' of previous years). In the recruitment sphere, as a consequence of the implementation of the new organisational chart adopted by the Management Board and the change management policy conducted within the Agency, in 2018 many managerial positions were published and filled in.

In a nutshell during 2018, 187 new recruitments were concluded (newcomers who took up duties after the selection procedure and after medical check-up). However, due to high internal and external turnover, the net increase in staff compared to the previous year was +117, which lead to the overall number of 643 posts filled (temporary agents, contract agents and seconded national experts). HR is also managing the traineeship programme that allowed 30 new trainees to

join the Agency.

It is to be noted that about 50% of all Frontex staff are newcomers who joined the Agency during the last two years. This growth requires additional workload for all services provided by HR, pre and post recruitment, by the three HR Teams of Recruitment, Personnel Administration and Learning & Development. In order to handle this change and growth all HR services have been strengthened and will further develop in the future.

Frontex's HR services also looked into the possibilities of increased efficiency of recruitment processes. A new e-recruitment system which facilitates registration of applications and management of recruitment procedures became operational late summer 2017. Also, the visibility of published job vacancies was increased making extensive use of new diversified communication channels, such as LinkedIn and Twitter. Efforts were also made to further strengthen Frontex's employer branding in order to identify Frontex as a preferred employer among potential candidates.

In view of the Agency's objective to reach 1,000 staff by 2020 (without prejudices to new political agreements on the European standing corps reached in Spring 2019), the project for introduction of SYSPER is ongoing (the EC Human Resources and Management Information System for managing the employees' data, staff rights and obligations, time management and others features for career management and organisation charts).

In the course of 2018, Frontex continued to implement new or revised HR policies, namely on:

- the establishment and use of reserve lists;
- the establishment of shift work;
- a new offer for language courses.

Other aspects of HR developments aimed for implementation in 2019 are:

- working time registration system;
- competency framework;
- procurement of medical services;
- social policy for staff.

Missing implementing rules to Staff Regulations will be adopted in the course of 2019.

4.7.2. Recruitment

| Process | Volume/quantity | Additional comments |
|--|-----------------|---|
| New external procedures started/published in 2018 | 56 | Several procedures covered more than one post to be filled |
| Recruitments completed – newcomers joined Frontex in 2018 (A) | 146 | Figure refers to new staff members without former employment contract with Frontex |
| Recruitment completed – change of contract and/or status in 2018 (B) | 41 | Figure refers to staff members appointed to a new position after having successfully participated in a completed external recruitment process |
| TOTAL Recruitment completed (A + B) | 187 | |
| Departures | 29 | Figure refers to staff members that left the Agency |
| Internal reassignments | 23 | Figure refers to staff members that have been reassigned in the interest of the service |
| Traineeship programme | 30 | Position filled during spring and autumn intake |
| Interims programme | 40 | Position filled during the year (on a rotation basis) |

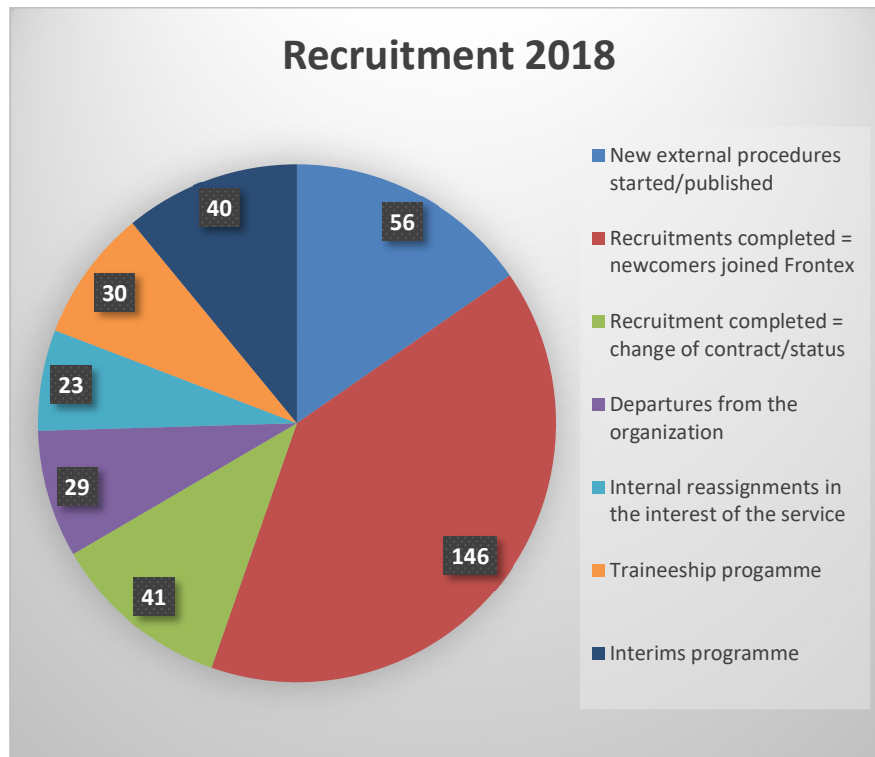
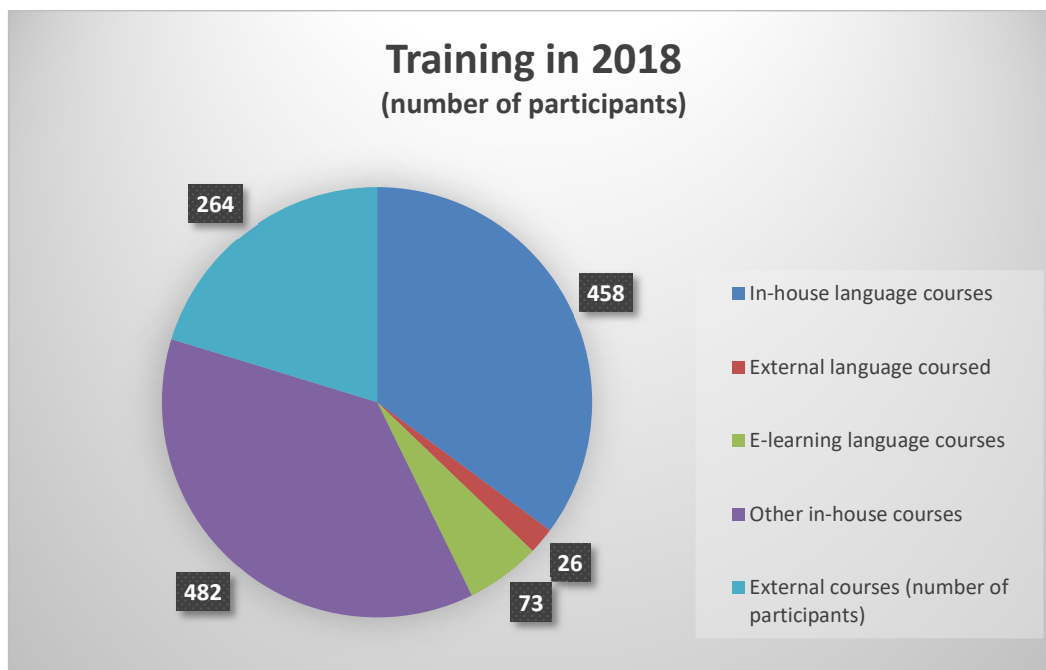
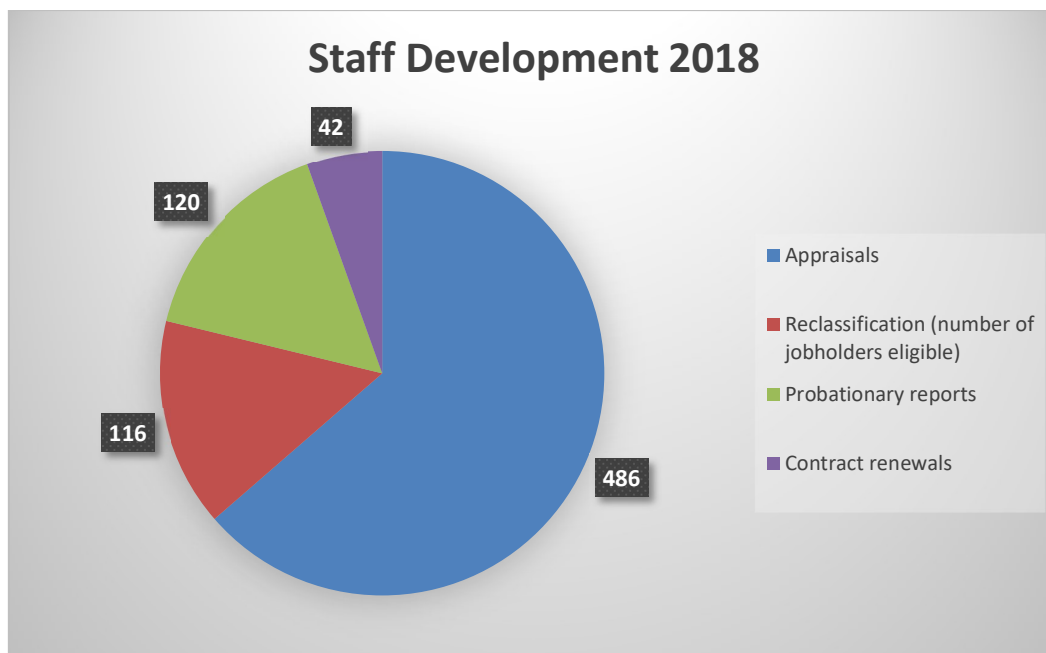


Figure 4 - Staff recruitment 2018

4.7.3. Staff development and training

| Process | Volume/quantity | Additional comments |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Appraisal | 486 appraisals processed (27% increase in one year) | 92 % of appraisals were finalised by 31/12; No complaints under Article 90 (2). There was 1 appeal filed to the Appeal Assessor within the appraisal procedure as per Article 7 of the appraisal rules for contract staff. |
| Reclassification | 116 jobholders eligible (51 TAs and 65 CAs) | The process for 2018 is on-going. |
| Probation | 120 probationary periods started in 2018 | So far two contracts have not been confirmed after the probationary period as the result of the unsatisfactory performance during the probationary period (some probationary periods are to be finalised in 2019). |
| Contract renewal | 42 renewal procedures started in 2018 (for contracts ending in 2019, 25 of which leading to indefinite contract) | 41 contracts were renewed in 2018 (and 1 contract renewed in Jan, 2019) No complaints under Article 90 (2). |
| Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in-house language courses: 31 groups in the spring semester (6 languages - DE, EN, ES, FR, PL and IT) - 200 participants 30 groups in the autumn semester (6 languages - DE, EN, ES, FR, IT) | It should be noted that apart from language courses (newly including the option of an e-learning and the reimbursement of external language courses), other in-house courses as well as external courses, newcomers' induction programme (involving 243 |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>and PL) - 258 participants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • e-learning language courses: 73 participants • external language courses: 26 requests • other in-house courses - 482 participants • external courses - 264 participants | <p>newcomers) and leadership and management development programme (involving 21 managers) were successfully continued during 2018.</p> |
|--|--|--|

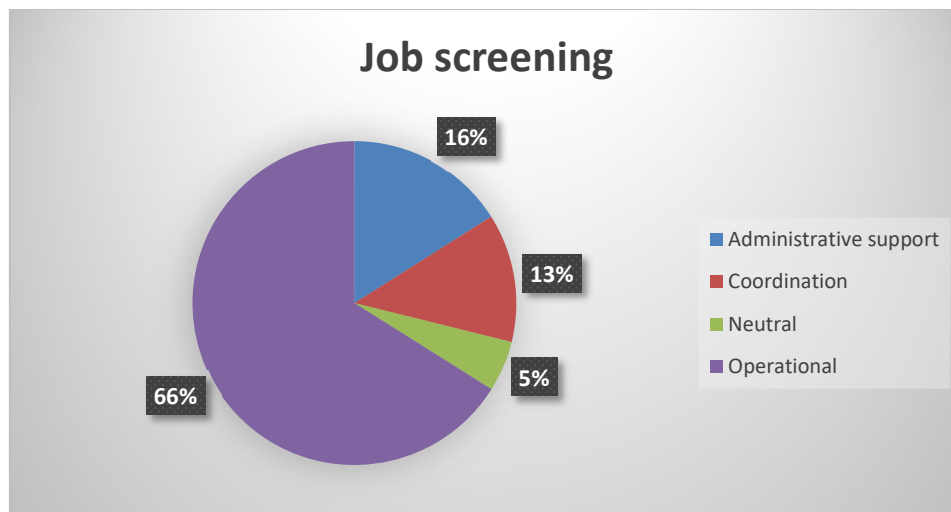


4.7.4. Job screening

The standardised job screening exercise (classifications of posts into the roles of Administrative support, Coordination, Neutral and Operational)⁹ was done according to the guidelines defined by the EU Agencies Network and based on staff figures including temporary and contract staff as well as seconded national experts and existing posts with open replacement on 31 December 2018.

| TYPE / ROLE | Number | As a percentage of all staff | CATEGORY | Number | As a percentage of all staff |
|------------------------|--------|------------------------------|---|--------|------------------------------|
| ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT | 105 | 16.33% | DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT | 3 | 0.47% |
| | | | HR MANAGEMENT | 27 | 4.20% |
| | | | INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY | 20 | 3.11% |
| | | | INTERNAL AUDIT AND CONTROL | 3 | 0.47% |
| | | | LOGISTICS | 48 | 7.47% |
| | | | HEAD OF RESOURCES | 4 | 0.62% |
| COORDINATION | 84 | 13.06% | LEGAL ADVICE | 29 | 4.51% |
| | | | COMMUNICATION/ INFORMATION | 13 | 2.02% |
| | | | GENERAL COORDINATION | 42 | 6.53% |
| NEUTRAL | 33 | 5.13% | FINANCE, NON-OPERATIONAL PROCUREMENT AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT | 33 | 5.13% |
| | | | LINGUISTIC | 0 | 0.00% |
| OPERATIONAL | 421 | 65.47% | TOP LEVEL OPERATIONAL COORDINATION | 13 | 2.02% |
| | | | PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION | 104 | 16.17% |
| | | | EVALUATION AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT | 83 | 12.91% |
| | | | GENERAL OPERATIONAL | 221 | 34.37% |
| TOTALS | 643 | 100% | | 643 | 100% |

⁹ In line with the EC methodology for Agencies job screening



4.8. Assessment by management

4.8.1. *Ex ante* controls

Frontex conducts *ex ante* controls in accordance with its policy of *ex-ante* control which complements the provisions of the Financial Regulation. In accordance with this policy, each transaction is subject to *ex ante* control. In addition, as grants to Member States constitute the major part of Frontex's budget, additional *ex ante* requirements exist as concerns submission of supporting documents proving the costs incurred.

Consequently, during 2018 Frontex continued the efforts to strengthen the *ex ante* control framework, in particular in the case of joint operations, pilot projects and return operations due to their high value. The total amount paid in 2018 in the form of grants to Member States for their participation in operational activities equalled EUR 115,631,488. Out of this amount, Frontex verified supporting documents substantiating the request for final payment for the amount of EUR 69,041,105 giving the coverage of 59.71% of the total amount paid.

As a result of introducing a new financing scheme in 2018, characterised by an increased use of unit costs, Frontex amended its policy on *ex ante* controls in 2018 to include controls on unit costs claimed. Due to the life cycle of the operational activities, the first controls of unit costs will take place in 2019 when the claims will be submitted by the MS authorities.

4.8.2. *Ex post* controls

Since 2014, Frontex has a Service Level Agreement with EIGE, on the bilateral exchange of experts in order to perform mutually *ex post* controls. As a result, in 2018, Frontex carried out an *ex post* control exercise in EIGE, checking whether the internal control system ensures the compliance of the transactions with the financial rules and with internal procedures. In return, EIGE supported Frontex in performing the control on the validation of user access rights granted in ABAC. This control resulted in a short report indicating small shortcomings in the rights encoded in ABAC. All detected inconsistencies were corrected by Frontex and led subsequently to the strengthening of the internal controls.

The *ex post* control activities implemented by the Inspection and Control Office kicked off with a recruitment of 1 staff who joined the Office mid-July 2018. *Ex-post* control were carried out in Spain, Italy and Greece and they focused on:

- Spain – Guardia Civil and Policia Nacional: Management and control system and implementation of a new financing scheme/methodology used for the calculation of unit costs.
- Italy – all beneficiaries such as Polizia di Stato, Guardia di Finanza, Guardia Costiera: Management and control system and implementation of a new financing scheme/methodology used for the calculation of unit costs.
- Greece – Hellenic Police and Hellenic Coast Guard: Management and control system and implementation of a new financing scheme/methodology used for the calculation of unit costs.

Additionally, one performance evaluation of the TRU ICT platform in house was done (*ex post* project evaluation) and an *ex post* control policy (ED decision) was revised and approved in December.

5. Management and internal control

The internal control is a process that helps an organisation to achieve its objectives and sustain operational and financial performance, respecting rules and regulations. It supports sound decision making, taking into account risks to the achievement of objectives and reducing them to acceptable levels through cost-effective controls. Internal control applies to all activities, irrespective of whether they are financial or non-financial.

Following the expanded mandate and responsibilities of Frontex under the new European Border and Coast Guard Regulation as well as the introduction of changes to the European Commission's internal control framework on 19 April 2017, Frontex's internal control framework (ICF) was updated accordingly. The **revised Frontex's internal control framework (revised ICF)** was adopted by the Management Board on 22 November 2017.

To appropriately and effectively address the objectives of the revision, Frontex decided to change the approach from **compliance-based** to **risk-based**. This approach enabled to act according to strategic directions ensured by internal control processes and mechanisms that provide the Executive Director with reasonable assurance that the Agency delivers effectively even in cases where business continuity measures are activated.

Frontex's revised ICF defines five major components, (i.e. **building blocks that underpin the framework's structure** and support the Agency in its efforts to achieve its objectives) namely: (1) control environment, (2) risk assessment, (3) control activities, (4) information and communication, and (5) monitoring activities. These five components are **interlinked and must be present and effective at all levels of the Agency**, in order for the internal control over Frontex's operations to be considered effective.

Each of the five components consists of several principles (17 in total). This layout facilitated the implementation of the revised ICF during 2018 as well as served as a guidance for the management when assessing whether each above mentioned component is present and effectively functioning in harmony. A holistic approach of assessing the framework from 17 perspectives contributes to providing a reasonable assurance that the Agency's objectives are met, as they specify the actions required for effective internal control.

Following the adoption of the Management Board Decision on the **revised ICF**, the Executive Director was mandated to implement the framework, and to conduct an overall assessment of the presence and functioning of all internal control components at least annually (for the first time at the latest in the context of the Annual Activity Report for year 2019), and in particular to:

- *Establish and/or streamline the processes, structures and functions to accommodate changes resulting from the revision of the Frontex's internal control framework, and in particular the processes of risk management, control, planning and evaluating, reporting, and communicating.*
- *Ensure the adequate resources for an efficient and consistent implementation, and effective assessment of the internal control system;*
- *With support of the Inspection and Control Office to take appropriate actions to establish and manage the revised internal control framework implementation plan; the Internal Control Coordinator shall facilitate the process and support the managers in definitions of the baselines and targets for internal control indicators, taking into account their specificities and risks, and to improve the awareness and understanding of internal control framework by all staff, in particular through training, information and support activities.*

Since the adoption of the **revised ICF** in November 2017, the activities and status of the Internal Control System in Frontex have been gradually adapted to the new framework. Although the ultimate implementation of all the improvements has not yet been completed, during 2018 major elements of the revised ICF have been finalised, already enabling for an assessment to be performed fully against the established **revised ICF**. Final completion of the implementing measures for the revised ICF will be achieved during 2019.

The changes impact at the first stage the process of assessment, which is carried out by management, who monitors the functioning of the internal control system on a continuous basis. The status of the internal control system is summarised through internal control periodical reports, and discussed during the regular Internal Control Management Meetings (ICMM). During 2018, three ICMM sessions took place where assessments on the corporate risk status were made as well as the validation of quarterly reports on exceptions and non-compliant events. In addition, an annual assessment of the effectiveness of the ICF was performed by the managers and consolidated in the ICF annual assessment report.

The conclusions were elaborated on the basis of the following dedicated reports:

- The internal control regular reports based on the evaluation of the Frontex's Corporate Risk Log, and the Exceptions Register, and contributing to the quarterly assessments of effectiveness of the internal control system.

- The opinion of the internal auditor (IAS) as expressed in the audit reports and in its assessment of the implementation of post audit recommendations.
- The opinion and observations of the external auditor of Frontex (European Court of Auditors) as well as Frontex's actions proposed in response to the observations or recommendations received.

These reports result from a systematic analysis of the evidence available. This approach provides 'reasonable assurance'¹⁰ so as to the completeness and reliability of the information reported. The control results and other elements that support management's assurance are detailed below as follows: control results, audit observations and recommendations, assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control system. The inputs are used to provide the conclusions as regards the assurance.

All directors of division, and where appropriate their subordinated staff, were requested to issue individual declarations of assurance which were presented to the Executive Director as an input and supporting evidence for him in order to produce his own Declaration of Assurance as the authorising officer¹¹.

5.1. Control results

Frontex has an internal Control System (ICS) in place which specifies the necessary requirements, actions and expectations in order to build an effective system of internal control that can provide reasonable assurance on the achievement of Frontex's objectives.

The internal control system also includes a number of internal procedures, for example, guidance on conflicts of interests, a code of good administrative behaviour, and the procurement procedures. New internal procedures are introduced when necessary and existing procedures are revised in regular intervals.

In accordance with the revised Internal Control Framework and the 12 Internal Control Principle adopted therein, Frontex revised the procedure ensuring that overrides of controls or deviations from the established processes and procedures are documented, duly approved, and logged centrally; the ED Decision R-2018-102 applying to the management of exceptions and non-compliance events entered into force on 1 October 2018 and was implemented in course of Quarter 4.

The control assessment results are presented hereunder. They cover the following areas: internal control assessment report (p. 5.1.1), report on exceptions and non-compliant events (p. 5.1.2); risk assessment report (p. 5.1.3); and audits' reports (p. 3.2).

5.1.1. Internal control assessments

In the course of the revised ICF implementation, a consolidation of the risks and issues logged within the Frontex's improvement log was prepared enabling prioritisation of actions during the year. Out of this exercise a consolidated Frontex's improvement log was established serving as a source for the internal control monitoring and reporting concluded on a regular basis in the Internal Control Coordinator Reports. The Log is based on multiple sources including: Exceptions and Non-compliance Register Report, Frontex Corporate Risks Log, Quarterly Internal Control Management Meetings' conclusions, IAS audit' recommendations, external auditors' findings and recommendations.

¹⁰ An internal control system, no matter how well designed and operated, cannot provide an absolute guarantee regarding achievement of an entity's objectives. This is because of inherent limitations of any control system and the possibility of deliberate human intervention to circumnavigate controls.

¹¹ Following the Management Board decision dated 22 November 2017 adopting the revised Frontex's Internal Control Framework, after the revised framework is fully operational, the declaration of assurance (1) by the Executive Director will be complemented by the statement (2) of the Internal Control Coordinator, both attached to the Annual Activity Report (for Annual Activity Report of 2019 and onwards).

Other issues are identified *ad-hoc*, at the Internal Control Management Meetings or during the annual evaluation of the internal control system.

The internal control assessment results presented below, summarise the regular assessments of the controls performed during the year, focusing on:

- action plan for the full implementation of Frontex's ICF by end of 2018,
- exceptions and non-compliances registered in 2018;
- risk assessment reports;
- audits' reports and observations;
- results of the internal control system annual assessment of 2018.

5.1.2. Action plan for the improvement areas to be implemented in 2018

| Milestone | Result | Status 31/12/2018 |
|---|--|---|
| I. Internal control baseline setting | | |
| 1. Confirming descriptions of roles and responsibilities in Frontex (after conclusion of the restructuring project) | All roles and reporting lines included in the Frontex's organigram including the list of the processes are defined and communicated, covering the whole organisation Document: updated Frontex's Internal Structure and Rules of Procedure (FISRoP) | Included in the ED Decision 2018/159 on FISRoP (adopted) |
| 2. Updating high-level business process map | The map documented and agreed by the senior managers Document: updated Frontex's high-level business process map | Up to date version prepared for discussion at the ICMM |
| 3. The process of the internal governance documents categorising and endorsement rules is defined, and followed | Procedure on internal governance documents management (e.g. existing strategies, policies, procedures, guidelines, working instructions, rules, etc.) adopted by the ED and followed Document: updated Frontex's Internal Structure and Rules of Procedure (FISRoP) | Included in the ED Decision 2018/159 on FISRoP (adopted) |
| 4. Programming documents for the following periods indicating ownership (responsible manager) for each product or service confirmed according to the new structures | Clarity on the responsibility of each manager for their delivery and controls applied to achieve the expected result. Document: Programming Document 2018–2020, including AWP 2018 and AWP 2019 updated according to the new organigram. | On-going; the revised structure of activities in the Single Programming Document introduced; updated delegations in place |
| 5. List of all Frontex's projects and initiatives aligned with the adopted Programming Documents | Frontex's Single Programming Document will include a segment on the IT enabled project portfolio. Document: a revised multiannual IT strategy in place which is being drafted for endorsement. | Progress in both areas was made and tasks are being completed within 2019 |
| II. Evaluating Internal Control System according to the baselines defined. | | |
| 6. The existing internal documents (strategies, policies, procedures, other) reviewed and cleared | All internal governance-related documents, which are in force, reviewed and categorised according to the FISRoP Document: Inventory of categorised, updated and valid documents established and maintained in MyFX | Review done; to be repeated in course of 2019 |
| 7. All Frontex's entities reviewed against Internal Control Principles defined in the revised ICF | The Frontex's Improvement Log updated Document: List of the revised Internal Control Indicators | On-going. Reports collected and bilateral meetings concluded with all HoUs; the updated list of the ICI to be discussed at the ICMM |

5.1.3. Register of exceptions and non-compliance events – overview of 2018

Exceptions recorded in 2018 followed the process described in the Procedure for Recording and Monitoring of Exceptions (ED Decision 2015/88). As of 1 October 2018 a new Procedure Applying to the Management of Exceptions and Non-compliance Events was in force (ED Decision 2018/102) – a requirement for both procedures was to set up a system to ensure that all instances of overriding controls and deviations from established processes and procedures are documented. For the purpose of this summary, the statistics were made following the ED Decision 2015/88, which applied to the recording process in three quarters of 2018.

Several control strengthening actions were introduced by the Inspection and Control Office based on the revised procedure followed by the review of the record of exceptions recorded in 2017, and performed in Q1 of 2018. Out of this review two more events related to 2017 were recorded in the 2018 register (the appropriate note was made in the Annual Activity Report of 2017)¹². To keep clarity and consistency of the reports, these two events are marked and explained below in the statistics of 2018.

In addition, to eliminate issues observed in the previous periods, the following corrective measures were applied to the exceptions and non-compliance recording process in the course of 2018:

1. The revision of the quality checks in the exceptions and non-compliance recording process¹³.
2. A more comprehensive, regular review of the high-value procurement procedures executed since November 2015 (adoption of the procedure 2015/88) in the areas that impacted the statistics on exceptions and non-compliance events to the highest extent.
3. Update of the relevant processes including ex-ante controls in the procurement and financial units to assure that all budget is committed with clear link to the approved Programming Document (Annual Work Programme, including annexed Procurement Plan and Budget), or a duly approved exception.
4. Assuring timely publication of all updates of the financial decision (e.g. procurement plans, budget) approved during the year.

The factual total number of events occurring in 2018 equals to 141 cases (Chart 1), covering an amount of EUR 11,063,743 (Chart 2). The average amount per exception is EUR 78,466 (Chart 3). The factual ratio % (amount of exceptions to the total payments in 2018) decreased to 3.77% comparing with the factual 2017 figures.

¹² The total number of events registered in 2018 equals to 143 cases (Chart 1), covering an amount of EUR 18,119,156 (Chart 2). The average amount per exception is EUR 126,707 (Chart 3). The Ratio % (amount of exceptions to the total payments in 2018) reached 6.18%.

¹³ Recording and reporting on 'Exceptions and Non-Compliance' is one of the management tools used to draw conclusions on the effectiveness of internal control and/or changes to the internal control system needed. A system must be in place to ensure that all instances of overriding controls or deviations from the established processes and procedures are documented. All instances must be justified and approved before action is taken, and logged centrally.

Chart 1 The growing tendency is noted when comparing the number of events during the last five years.

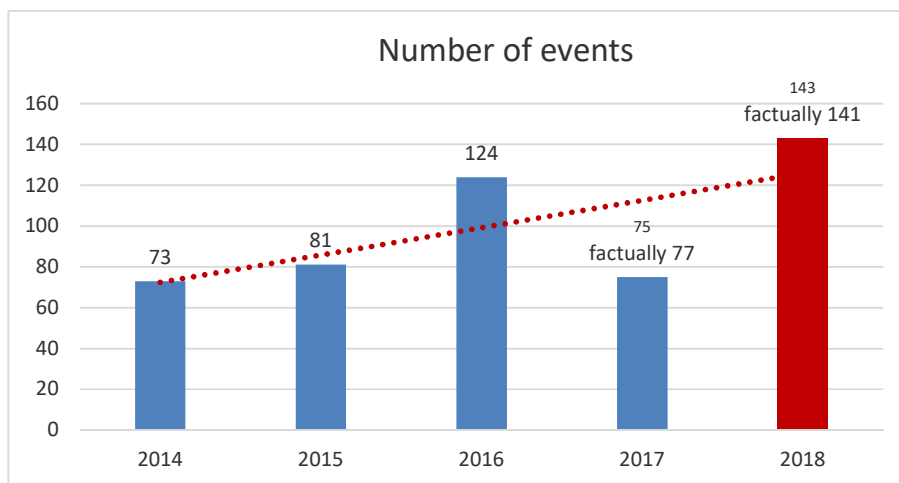
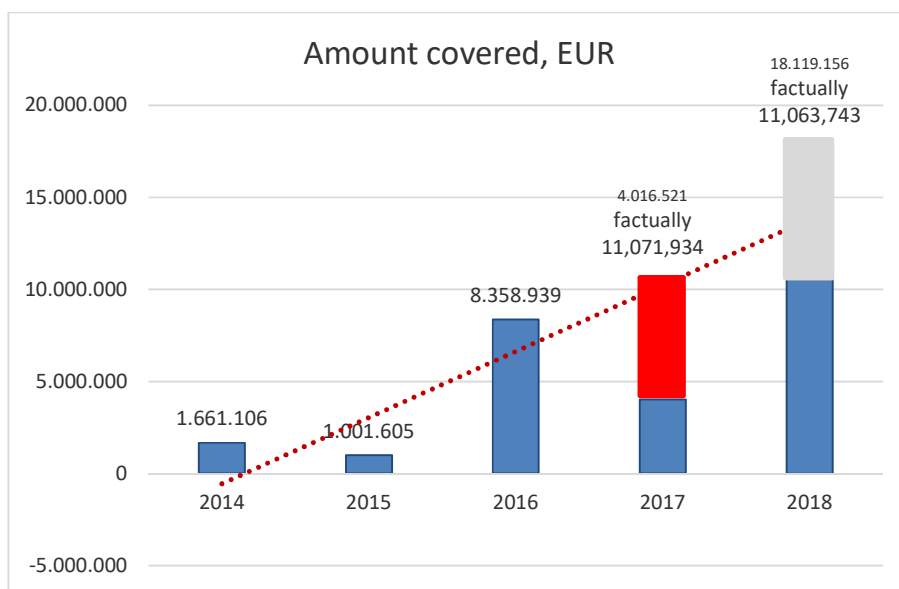


Chart 2 In relation to the increased Agency budget the decreasing tendency is noted when comparing the data of the last five years.



Note: As mentioned in 2017 CAAR, it must be highlighted that the 2018 statistics are impacted by two exceptions that were related to the events of 2017 (amount of around EUR 7 million) but had been registered in Q1 2018. It was identified through ex post control in 2018 resulting from strengthening of the control measures within the Inspection and Control Office.

Chart 3 The decreasing tendency is noted when comparing the data of the last five years.

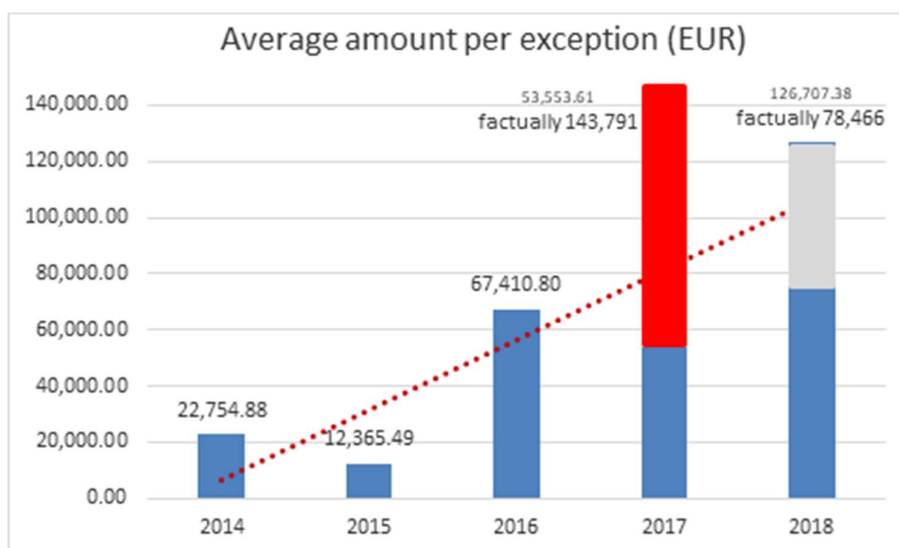
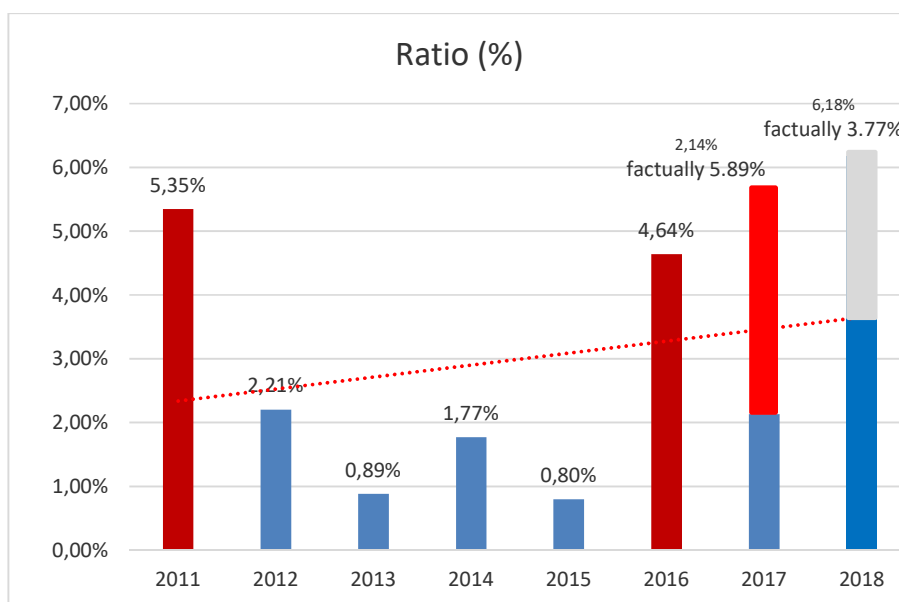


Chart 4 - the Control indicator ratio amounts to 6.18%. However, by including two exception events of 2017 amounting to more than EUR 7 million, which were recorded in 2018 as a result of strengthening of control by the Inspection and Control Office, the value of 2017 would need to be corrected to 5.89% and the factual indicator for 2018 amounts to 3.77%.



The highest amounts of exceptions relate to:

- procurement procedures: 16 exceptions for the amount of EUR 14,811,002.00 which represents 81.7 % of the total amount recorded as exceptions; out of 16, five exceptions are above 1,000,000 each;
- Financial Regulation and implementing rules: 95 exceptions for the amount of EUR 3,245,990.00 which represents 17.9 % of the total amount recorded as exceptions.

The highest amounts were recorded as exceptions or non-compliance events by:

- ECRET – 8 events for EUR 6,980,808.00 (38.5%)
- BFCS – 1 event (of 2017) for EUR 5,215,413.00 (28.8%)
- PRU – 1 event (of 2017) for EUR 1,840,000, and 1 EUR 42,130.00 (both 10.2%)
- ICT – 8 events for EUR 1,249,149.00 (6.9%)
- ODSO – 11 events for EUR 1,138,629.00 (6.3%)

5.1.4. Risk assessments

Frontex's Corporate Risk Management process builds on the continuous assessment of risks, developing and incorporating response plans and ongoing revision of the measures. During 2018 three Internal Control reports provided information on the actual status of risks exposures, assessing their likelihood and impact. Nine corporate risks with the highest risk exposure were identified at beginning of the year, for frequent monitoring and reporting to the executive management.

In the margins of the implementation of the Annual Work Programme 2018 but also during the internal revision of the Internal Control Framework, those corporate risks were evaluated and assessed once again and updated in the course of the year.

At corporate level the following main groups of risks were identified as potentially negatively impacting delivery of the Frontex's mandate:

- Competing new events and initiatives, together with not sufficient record of the baseline of the originally planned objectives, might not allow for effective control of the Frontex's delivery.
- Quality and efficiency of Frontex's deliverables may be affected by non-sufficient centralised data governance.
- The low number of applications resulting in unsuccessful procedures, and the relatively high internal turn-over of staff, driving unplanned recruitments are putting the recruitment plan at risk.

The Frontex's Corporate Risk Log was reviewed to introduce the controls on the response plans' implementation (April 2018). The corporate risks were organised according to response plans, to effectively decrease the likelihood of risks. Out of this exercise, seven response areas were identified with three of them being followed with detailed response plans implemented in 2018.

Planning & Change Management

Process of Internal Control (based on the enhanced planning and evaluation) has been further redesigned by:

- Providing regular Internal Control Coordinator Reports,
- Organising the Quarterly Internal Control Management Meetings.

This Internal Control platform was used to update the plans and assess change initiatives recorded in between of the regular planning cycles, integrating information on usage of the Human, Technical and Financial resources.

During 2018 three quarterly Internal Control Management Meetings took place.

Corporate Data Management

The projects on data modelling and IT Architecture of Frontex continued in 2018 (design phase) with follow ups in the following years (implementation phase).

During 2018, a revised multiannual IT Strategy for Frontex was developed and such document has been internally circulated for adoption by ED decision possibly during the first quarter of 2019.

HR Recruitment Effectiveness

The risks related to recruitment continue to be an element to be addressed. Although the low correction coefficient was already highlighted as a factor outside of the Agency's internal controls impacting on the number of candidates applying

for Frontex's posts (relevant statement was included in the IAS Strategic Audit Plan dated 5 September 2017¹⁴); Frontex has taken measures to maximise publicity of the vacancies offered particularly through specialised websites such as LinkedIn. These measures already provided yield during 2018 where the number of applicants per announcement rose, however the high turn-over of staff still remains an issue to be addressed.

Other internal or external developments concerning Frontex, relevant for the assessment of corporate risks.

Change of the organisational structure

The re-organisation of the Agency's structure was approved by the Management Board in June 2017 impacting on the allocation of resources. The new organisational chart foresees the inclusion of mitigation measures in terms of control such as the placement of procurement and ex-post control activities under hierarchical lines which are independent from finances, and the allocation of the internal control function to a fully-fledged Inspection and Control Office independent from the division responsible for the management of resources. As indicated by the Management Board an assessment of the new structure adequacy was performed in 2018. This review resulted in particular in the confirmation of the creation of a new division for International and European Cooperation taking into account the expansion of the mandate in international cooperation and the development of networks of liaison officers. The existence of the European Centre for Return under the umbrella of the Operational Response Division was also confirmed. The prolonging uncertainty would have contained the risk for the organisation, requiring adequate measures and managerial controls.

Conclusion of the Headquarters Agreement

The Headquarters Agreement between Frontex and the Polish Government had been ratified by the Polish Parliament, and entered into force as of 1 November 2017. The HQ Agreement has an effect on several processes of the Agency with major consequences on the working conditions and the management of facilities.

One of the resulting projects is the construction of the new HQ building on the land offered by the Polish Government. Due to the size of the financial and human resources required for the project within the next few years, this undertaking requires adequate risk management, including establishing of appropriate controls. Presently the programme/project is in the inception phase under the responsibility of a dedicated Task Force directly reporting to the Executive director. The intention of the Executive director is to invite the Management Board to set up a dedicated advisory group.

According to the HQ agreement, the Polish Government is committed to facilitate the establishment of an accredited European School in Warsaw and to reimburse the schooling costs for non-Polish employees of Frontex until such an accredited European School is functional. This provision should serve as an important asset for advertising of the Frontex's jobs. However, these developments are out of the Agency's direct supervision, the adequate controls will be set following the HQ Agreement implementation plan to monitor the progress and impact on the recognised recruitment risk.

5.2. Audit observations and recommendations

5.2.1. The European Court of Auditors

The European Court of Auditors (ECA) is required to provide its final opinion on the accounts of Frontex 'no later than 1 June of the following year'. Therefore, the ECA's opinion on Frontex's accounts for 2018 was not available at the time the Annual Activity Report 2018 was prepared. The opinion of the ECA on Frontex's accounts for the year ending 2017 is provided below as this sheds some light on the adequacy of the internal control system.

Opinion on the reliability of the accounts

¹⁴ 'Given that the country correction coefficient calculation method is based on the Staff Regulations, it is outside of the internal control powers of the Agency. As such, the risk that the Agency fails in its mission to recruit staff from across the EU rather than from a few countries remains high. The nature of the Agency's operations depends upon having staff from across the EU and therefore the associated risks of failure to implement the budget and achievement of objectives are also increased.'

In the Court's opinion, the Agency's annual accounts present fairly, in all material respects, its financial position as at 31 December 2017 and the results of its operations, its cash flows and the changes in net assets for the year then ended, in accordance with the its financial regulation and the accounting rules adopted by the Commission's accounting officer.

Opinion on the legality and regularity of the transactions underlying the accounts

In the Court's opinion, the transactions underlying the annual accounts for the year ended 31 December 2017 are legal and regular in all material respects.

Comments on the legality and regularity of transactions

The Agency received four tenders for ferry services (call for open tender) to transport migrants within Greece and signed a EUR 2m framework contract for a period of three years with the ferry company offering the lowest price. It turned out that the contractors transport capacity was seasonally limited. Therefore the Agency cancelled the contract by the end of 2017. A new framework contract amounting to EUR 1.8 m was signed with the second ranked tenderer in November 2017 who had offered the second lowest price. The direct award of the replacement contract was irregular, since the initial procurement procedure was closed and no negotiated procedure took place to agree the contract conditions that would apply until a new open procedure could have been completed.

The Staff Regulations provide that in the case of an external selection procedure, temporary staff can only be recruited at grades SC 1 to SC 2, AST 1 to AST 4 or AD 5 to AD 8. In 2017, the Agency recruited two staff at higher AST grades (14 in 2016). The recruitments at these grades were considered as being irregular by the ECA.

Comments on internal controls

The Agency financed support to Iceland's Coast Guard for the deployment of an airplane in Greece. Before reimbursing the expenditure claimed by Iceland, the Agency asked for invoices as evidence for one category of declared expenditure. Although the individual invoices were never provided, but a summary, the Agency reimbursed EUR 440 000. In this case, the ex-ante verification was considered by ECA as ineffective.

The Agency co-financed the deployment of one airplane used by the Spanish Guardia Civil. In the absence of documentation supporting the cost claimed for inspections and maintenance, the Agency reimbursed EUR 430 000 on the basis of an average cost per flight hour, which was calculated in line with cost ceilings used in contracts between Spanish authorities and private contractors. The ECA assessed that there was a risk that the real cost incurred was lower than what was reimbursed.

The Agency still needs to have a comprehensive Business Continuity Plan approved by its Management Board.

Comments on budgetary management

The Agency cancelled a high level of committed appropriations carried over from the previous year for reimbursements of operational expenditure with EUR 7.7 million, i.e. 16.5 % (2016: EUR 5.6 million, i.e. 17.6 %). The cooperating countries considerably over-estimated again the expenditure to be reimbursed by the Agency. The Agency transferred EUR 9.6 million from other budget lines to joint operations, contributing to a new carry-over amounting to EUR 40.5 million. The joint operations account for 69 % of the total cancelled appropriations in 2017 (EUR 11.1 m) and 46 % of the total appropriations carried forward into 2018 (EUR 87.6 m).

The appropriations available for return operations amounted to EUR 66.5 million. The Agency returned EUR 13.5 million, i.e. 20.3% (2016: EUR 23 million, i.e. 37.5 %) to the European Commission. Moreover, it also returned EUR 4 m from budget Title I (staff expenditure) as the planned number of new employees could not be recruited in 2017.

The 2017 initial budget of the Agency included a EUR 8.8 million statutory financial operational reserve for financing the deployment of rapid border interventions and return interventions. In September and in October 2017, the Agency transferred EUR 1.9 million from the reserve to its operational budget to fund other activities. None of the two transfers are in compliance with the Agency's financial regulation.

The Agency's 2017 budget included a non-statutory reserve amounting to EUR 11.9 million for unpredictable operational needs. Following transfers from other budget lines and an amendment of the budget, the funds used under the reserve amounted to EUR 24.7 million, i.e. 8.1 % of the initial budget. The reserve was used mainly to fund standard operations (EUR 8.4 million) and to fund a project on remotely-piloted aerial surveillance systems (i.e. drones, EUR 7 million) for which it had only budgeted EUR 1.1 million. The budgeting and use of non-statutory reserves does not comply with the

principle of budget specification and impairs budget transparency.

Comments on financial management and performance

The Agency publishes vacancy notices on its own website and in other channels such as the interagency network, but not on the website of the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO), which would according to ECA increase transparency, publicity and allow citizens to identify vacancies published by the different European Institutions and agencies collectively.

According to their Framework Financial Regulation, agencies should introduce a single solution for the electronic exchange and storage of information with third parties participating in public procurement procedures (e-procurement). The European Commission is developing a comprehensive IT solution covering all phases of public procurement procedures and launched tools for electronic invoicing in 2010 (e-invoicing), for the electronic publication of documents related to contract notices in the electronic version of the EU Official Journal in 2011 (e-tendering) and for the electronic submission of tenders in 2015 (e-submission). According to the Commission, by the end of 2017 the Agency had introduced e-invoicing and e-tendering for certain procedures, but not e-submission. However, it needs to be borne in mind that the development of the e-submission feature is delayed.

Frontex took note of the ECA comments and will make improvements where necessary.

5.2.2. The discharge authority's (European Parliament) observations and measures taken by Frontex

The European Parliament granted discharge to Frontex in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for the financial year 2016¹⁵. The main areas in which the European Parliament made comments are listed below:

- follow up with the 2013, 2014 and 2015 discharge recommendations;
- revision and simplification of the entire financial scheme in 2017;
- high level of carry-overs for Title II (administrative) and Title III (operational);
- high level of cancelled carry-overs for Title III;
- need of additional office space due to the planned increase of staff;
- difficulties in finding staff with the required profile;
- preparation of draft internal rules on whistleblowing;
- minutes of management board meeting available to the public;
- no confirmation if the meetings with lobbyists were held, registered and made public;
- refusals of public access to documents applications, one was transmitted to the European Ombudsman;
- improvements of the internal control system in 2017;
- recommendations of the Internal Audit Service (IAS) in 2016;

Frontex has taken the measures in the lights of the Discharge Authority's recommendations. Summary points are provided below:

- most of the outstanding issues are closed, only two are ongoing or partially implemented;
- a new simplified financing scheme entered into force as of 1 February 2018, with the result of reducing the number of grants from 1700 to 300/400;
- Title II carry-overs were high due to the nature of the multiannual contracts for ICT services and carry-overs for Title III and they should decrease in 2019 due to the introduction of a new financing scheme, including unit costs;
- carry-overs cancellations should decrease in 2019, due to the introduction of a new financing scheme, including unit costs;
- the additional office space has been leased since January 2018; the fit-out works are ongoing;
- negative impact of the low salary correction coefficient, many applicants declined the job offer. Frontex intends to propose to its MB a set of temporary social measures;
- the rules on whistleblowing are drafted, Frontex will also adopt the relevant model decision, as per Commission's advice;
- with the launch of the new Frontex's website in March 2018 all minutes are available there;
- Frontex only met with registered lobbyists who are registered in the EU Transparency Register and publish annually an overview of meetings on its website; no meetings were held in 2017;
- Frontex positively reacted to the European Ombudsman (EO) proposals for solutions and took actions to implement them. The EO closed the case and reported no maladministration;

¹⁵ The discharge in respect of the implementation of the Agency's budget for 2017 has been granted (29 March 2019) and is pending publication in the Official Journal at the moment of preparing this report.

- Most significant improvements: establishment and streamlining the processes, structures and functions to accommodate changes, revision of Frontex's internal control framework (in particular processes of risk management, control, planning, evaluating, reporting and communicating). Process of internal control has been redesigned and used to update the plans and assess change initiatives recorded;
- The projects on data modeling and IT architecture of Frontex continued in 2017, to bring results in 2018 and following years.

Despite the actions mentioned before, taking also into considerations the European Parliament recommendations, 2017 and 2018 were years the Agency underwent deep and radical internal changes as regards

- its organisational structure,
- the introduction of the new internal Rules of Procedure,
- high speed recruitments of new comers, and
- the development of a new managerial community and managerial culture.

New managers - Directors, Heads of Units, Heads of Sectors- were recruited forming a very committed new managerial level capable to absorb any future developments. A leadership program was completed to continue within the same spirit to address any future transformation.

The execution of an increased budget was at the same time accompanied by a permanent search for efficiency and effectiveness. The multipurpose patrolling of Frontex surveillance assets is a good example on how the deployment of one single equipment could serve several law enforcement communities and their respective objectives (illegal fishing, environmental crime, unlawful activities in the vicinity of Europe).

Reforming Frontex' internal governance was a further priority to include the reinforcement of internal reporting, ex-ante and ex-post audit and control capacities. As the agency addresses a wider scope of more complex and numerous topics, the increase of additional financial and human resources were considered as opportunities for developing a modern administration and look for efficiency gains. The revision of existing processes such as the adaptation of financial delegations and reporting duties should contribute to a high level of transparency and accountability while ensuring conformity and compliance to the rules.

5.2.3. Audits – Internal Audit Service

In the period of 2018, the Internal Audit Service, followed the Strategic Audit Plan 2017–2019¹⁶.

The evaluation of the field visit of the audit dedicated to the contract management performed in February 2017 was performed by the IAS in the course of 2018 and concluded with the final report received on 18 January 2019.

Scope and purpose: The overall objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the governance, risk management and internal control processes that Frontex has put in place for the management of contracts resulting from procurement to ensure compliance with the applicable rules and best value for money.

Outcomes: The six recommendations were issued, four of them with the priority status very important¹⁷ and two, with the status important. At the moment of preparing of this report, an action plan for the implementation of the accepted recommendations was adopted and presented to the IAS.

At the end of 2018, there have been 16 IAS recommendations (priority: important) issued in conclusions of the audits performed in execution of the previous iterations of the Strategic Audit Plans, and logged by the Agency with the status: 'ready for review', and one with the status: 'started' (deadline for implementation as of 31/12/2019).

On 26 January 2019, the IAS closed one of them and reopened eight; five remain with status: 'ready for review', and one: 'started'. On 26 April 2019 the Executive director met upon his initiative the Director General of IAS in order to discuss the strategic development of internal audit in view of the implementation of the European standing corps of border and coast guards that was agreed politically by the Council and the Parliament in March/April 2019.

¹⁶ IAS Strategic Internal Audit Plan 2017 – 2019 for FRONTEX – Ares(2017)4326621, 5 September 2017

¹⁷ Following conditions of the mutual expectations paper signed between IAS and Frontex, the Agency disagreed with the priority given by the IAS.

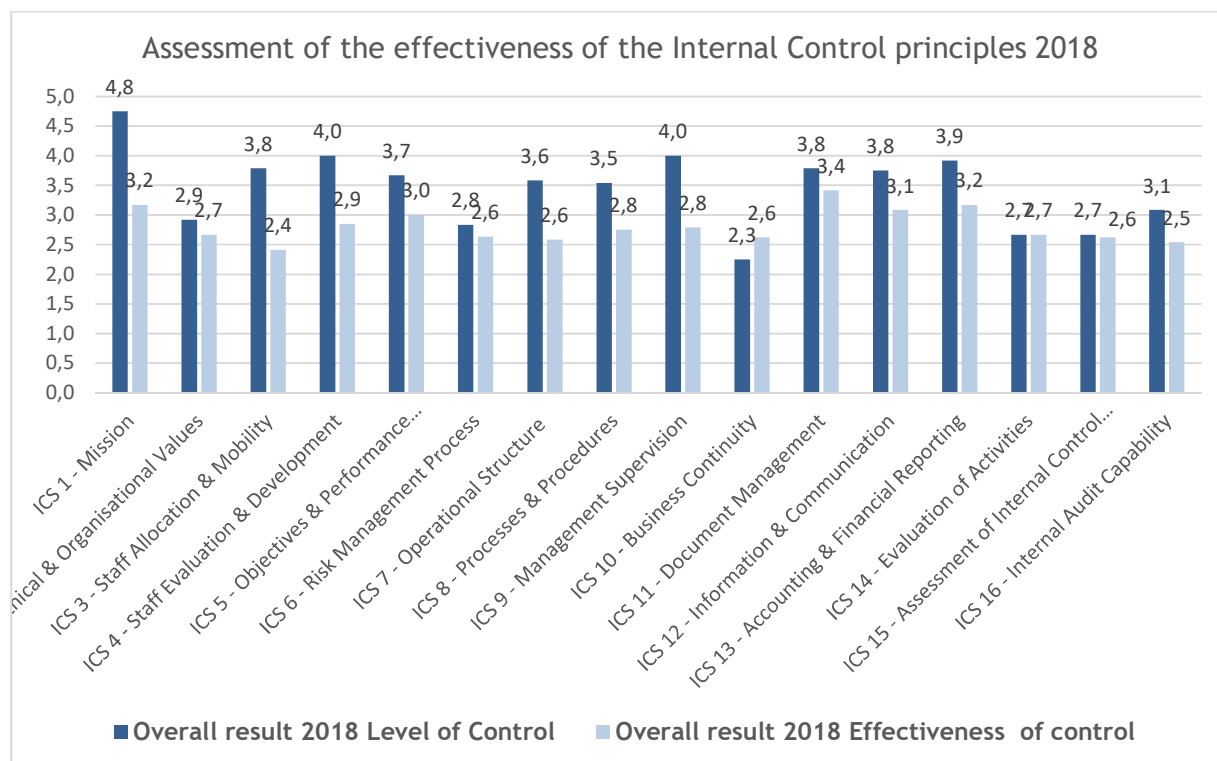
5.3. Assessment of the effectiveness of the internal control system

For the assessment of the internal control system as of the end of 2018, structures of internal control namely, ‘building blocks’ were established that provide regular management reports¹⁸. For each internal control requirement, the level of control and the effectiveness of the control is assessed.

The level of control is mainly determined by the findings summarised in the regular reports of the Internal Control Coordinator; these are discussed and validated by the heads of units, directors of divisions, DED and ED at quarterly Internal Control Management Meetings. During the meetings the availability of evidence for the different internal control requirements (as identified in the Guidelines on Measuring the Effectiveness of Internal Control Standards) is assessed.

The assessment of the effectiveness of control is based on the level of implementation of audit recommendations and improvement actions and the results of the ongoing risk assessment collected from all directors of divisions, heads of units and heads of offices, and conclusions of the Internal Control Management Meetings conducted in 2018.

The figure below provides a numerical summary of the results (a 1–5 scale is used where 1 is low and 5 is high) of the assessment of the internal controls as of the end of 2018.



¹⁸ The following reports were issued in course of 2018:

- Implementation Plan for the Revised ICF for 2018,
- Internal Control Service Strategic Audit Plan 2017–2019,
- Corporate Risk Assessment Report issued in May 2017.

5.4. Conclusions as regards assurance

Overall conclusion

Based on the internal control assessment process, the Directors of Divisions who were in charge of risk management and internal control of the activities performed by the Division under their managerial remit, confirmed that the state of internal control in their Division during 2018 was duly reported, and the information provided and represented in Section II.3 of the Report is to the best of their knowledge, accurate and complete.

Following these statements, and the outcome of the overall internal control assessment process for year 2018, it can be concluded that the internal control standards are functioning effectively. However, as described above there are areas where improvements are needed. This is especially important given that there will be a continued increase in both financial and human resources until 2020 and beyond. The significant changes in the mandate of the Agency will further impact on Frontex's activities, the internal organisation and the way it interacts with the Member States and other external stakeholders. It is anticipated that these changes will put a major strain on the internal control system, thus placing the revised Internal Control Framework in focus.

The information reported above stems from the results of internal control assessment processes, audits and monitoring and is contained in the reports listed above. This approach provides sufficient guarantees on the completeness and reliability of the information reported and provides a comprehensive coverage of Frontex's budget.

Reviewing the elements supporting the assurance as described and the evidence as presented in this Consolidated Annual Activity Report some areas for improvement were identified. However, they do not rise to the level of a 'reservations'.

6. Declaration of assurance

I, the undersigned,

Executive Director of Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency,

in my capacity as an authorising officer, declare that the information contained in this report gives a true and fair view ⁽¹⁹⁾.

I state that I have reasonable assurance that the resources assigned to the activities described in this report have been used for their intended purpose and in accordance with the principles of sound financial management, and that the control procedures put in place give the necessary guarantees concerning the legality and regularity of the underlying transactions.

This reasonable assurance is based on my own judgement, on the information at my disposal (including that provided by managers that reported to me) and on such work as the annual assessment of the internal control system, *ex ante* and *ex post* controls and the findings and observations of the Internal Audit Service and the European Court of Auditors for years prior to the year of this declaration.

I confirm that I am not aware of anything not reported here which could harm the interests of Frontex.

Although I have not specified any ‘reservations’, the attachment to this declaration specifies areas where significant improvements can be made to the internal control system.

Warsaw, _____ June 2019

[signed]

Fabrice Leggeri

⁽¹⁹⁾ True and fair in this context means a reliable, complete and correct view on the state of affairs in the Agency.

ANNEX 1 - Annual report on public access to documents

Summary

This annual report, covering the period regarding applications received between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2018, is drawn up in accordance with Article 17(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001²⁰.

The principle of transparency and the rights of individuals to access documents of EU bodies, as derived from Article 15 of the TFEU and Article 42 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU, is reemphasised in Article 74 of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation.

The practical arrangements for the implementation of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 are laid down in Management Board Decision No 25/2016 of 21 September 2016²¹, adopted pursuant to Article 74(3) of the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation.

Initial applications are decided by the Head of the Transparency Office established through Management Board Decision 25/2016 and embedded within the Legal and Procurement Unit, as successor to the Legal Affairs Unit, in cooperation with case-handlers from the business units holding the documents. While the Transparency Office also processes confirmatory applications, their decision is vested in the Director of Corporate Governance as internal administrative instance for reconsideration.

All documents forming subject to an application are assessed individually and on a case-by-case basis further to which Frontex can grant full or partial access, or has to refuse access. Total or partial refusals constitute exceptions in the sense of Article 4 of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 and applicants are provided the reasons for such, including information about available remedies in line with Articles 7(1) and 8(1) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.

Statistics

In 2018, Frontex received a total of 152 applications – of which 120 applications were admissible/processed as Public Access to Documents (PAD) applications: 101 initial and 19 confirmatory – as opposed to 108 initial and 10 confirmatory applications in 2017. This constitutes an increase by 8.57 percent as compared to 2017. The trend towards more complex applications, involving more than one business unit and consultations with third parties, continued also in 2018. Simultaneously, applications with a wide scope became increasingly the norm. Also, applications more and more aimed at a multitude of documents ranging up to several hundred pages, each and thus also showed the continuing increase of documents handled annually, which grew from 57 documents in 2010 and amounted to 1553 in 2018 – a 27-fold increase.

| Breakdown | No. |
|---|-----|
| Full access | 8 |
| Partial access | 58 |
| Access refused | 19 |
| Documents not held | 7 |
| Withdrawn applications; no proof of eligibility; application constituted a request for information processed by the Media and Public Relations Office | 41 |
| Confirmatory Applications | 19 |
| Total | 152 |

²⁰ Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001 of 30 May 2001 regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents (OJ L 145, 31.5.2001, p. 43).

²¹ Management Board Decision No 25/2016 of 21 September 2016 adopting practical arrangements regarding public access to the documents held by the European Agency for the Management of Operational Cooperation at the External Borders of the Member States of the European Union (the 'Agency').

Reasons for Refusal

In the majority of cases where access had to be denied partially or totally, this was based on:

- Article 4(1)(a) first indent of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001: regarding the protection of public interest as regards public security;
- Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001: regarding the protection of privacy and the integrity of the individual.

Scope of Applications

The majority of applications was related to Serious Incident Reports, information contained in operational plans or pertained to other documents regarding ongoing operations.

Background of Applicants

While the background and motivation of applicants is not relevant for the examination of the documents applied for and Frontex does not keep records, applicants provided such information voluntarily. The majority claiming to be academics, activists or bloggers.

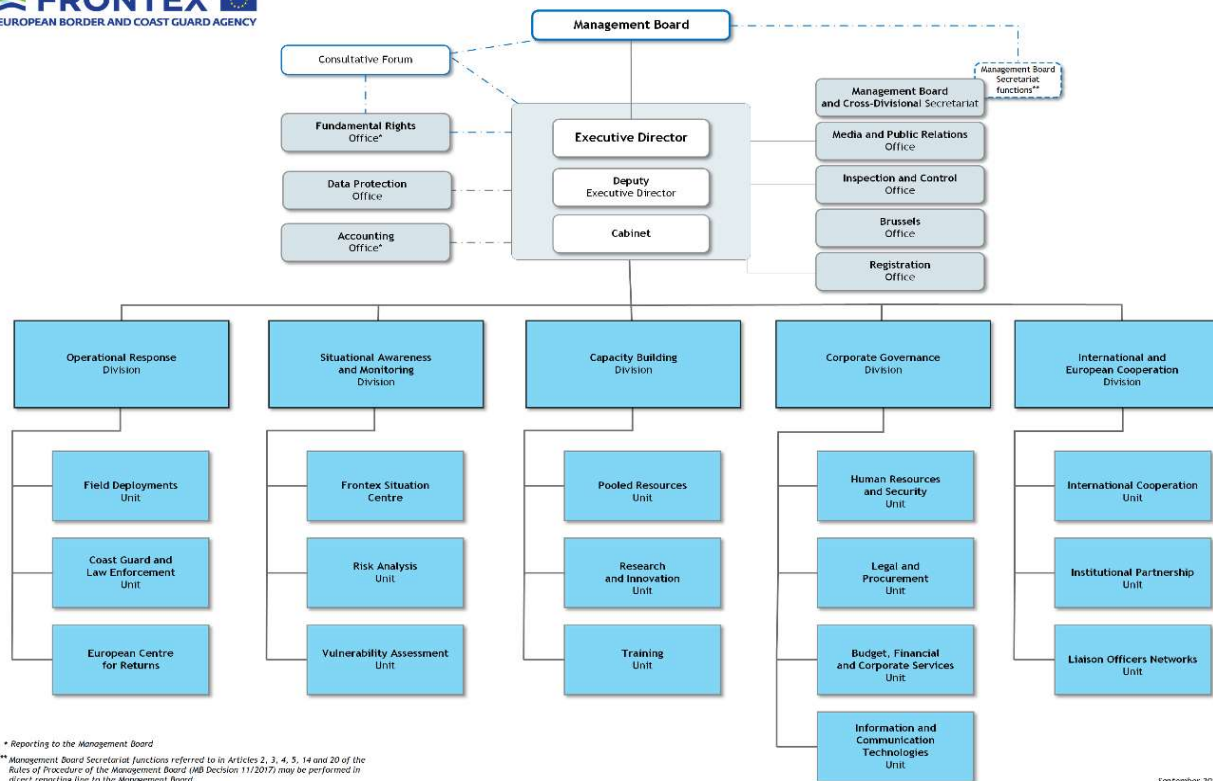
European Ombudsman Cases

The European Ombudsman (EO) has not notified Frontex of any cases related to public access to documents in 2018.

ANNEX 2 - Organisational Structure



Frontex Organisational Structure



ANNEX 3 - Human resources – establishment plan

Breakdown of Temporary Agents as of 31 December 2018

| Function group and grade | 2018 | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| | Authorised under the EU Budget | | Filled as of 31/12/2018 | |
| | Permanent posts | Temporary posts | Permanent posts | Temporary posts |
| AD16 | - | | - | |
| AD15 | - | 1 | - | |
| AD14 | - | 1 | - | 4 |
| AD13 | - | 6 | - | 4 |
| AD12 | - | 17 | - | 16 |
| AD11 | - | 17 | - | 11 |
| AD10 | - | 12 | - | 17 |
| AD9 | - | 23 | - | 15 |
| AD8 | - | 110 | - | 58 |
| AD7 | - | 72 | - | 58 |
| AD6 | - | 37 | - | 33 |
| AD5 | - | 15 | - | 10 |
| AD total | | 311 | | 226 |
| AST11 | - | | - | |
| AST10 | - | | - | |
| AST9 | - | | - | 3 |
| AST8 | - | 5 | - | 9 |
| AST7 | - | 11 | - | 16 |
| AST6 | - | 16 | - | 11 |
| AST5 | - | 27 | - | 14 |
| AST4 | - | 45 | - | 20 |
| AST3 | - | 3 | - | 4 |
| AST2 | - | | - | |
| AST1 | - | | - | |
| AST total | | 107 | | 77 |
| TOTAL | - | 418 | - | 303 |

Breakdown of staff by unit as of 31 December 2018

| DIVISION-UNIT | posts occupied | |
|--|----------------|------------|
| EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT | | |
| ED & DED | 2 | 2 |
| SPECIAL FUNCTIONS | | |
| ADVISER | 1 | 54 |
| CABINET AND ASSOCIATED ENTITIES ²² | 23 | |
| MEDIA AND PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE | 15 | |
| INSPECTION AND CONTROL OFFICE | 4 | |
| DATA PROTECTION OFFICE | 2 | |
| ACCOUNTING OFFICE | 1 | |
| FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS OFFICE | 8 | |
| OPERATIONS RESPONSE DIVISION (ORD) | | |
| Division Director and Secretariat | 1 | 160 |
| CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR COMBATTING DOCUMENT FRAUD | 16 | |
| OPERATIONAL DIVISION SUPPORT OFFICE | 23 | |
| FIELD DEPLOYMENT UNIT | 60 | |
| COAST GUARD AND LAW ENFORCEMENT UNIT | 14 | |
| EUROPEAN CENTRE FOR RETURNS (ECRET) UNIT | 46 | |
| SITUATIONAL AWARENESS AND MONITORING DIVISION (SAM) | | |
| Division Director and Secretariat | 3 | 139 |
| FRONTEX SITUATION CENTRE | 51 | |
| RISK ANALYSIS UNIT | 72 | |
| VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT UNIT | 13 | |
| CAPACITY BUILDING DIVISION (CBD) | | |
| Division Director and Secretariat | 2 | 88 |
| POOLED RESOURCES UNIT | 30 | |
| RESEARCH & INNOVATION UNIT | 15 | |
| TRAINING UNIT | 41 | |
| INTERNATIONAL AND EUROPEAN COOPERATION DIVISION (IEC) | | |
| Division Director and Secretariat | 2 | 43 |
| INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION UNIT | 16 | |
| INSTITUTIONAL PARTNERSHIP UNIT | 5 | |
| LIAISON OFFICERS NETWORK UNIT ²³ | 20 | |
| CORPORATE GOVERNANCE DIVISION (CGO) | | |
| Division Director and Secretariat | 5 | 157 |
| HUMAN RESOURCES AND SECURITY UNIT | 53 | |
| LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT UNIT | 22 | |
| BUDGET, FINANCIAL AND CORPORATE SERVICES UNIT | 45 | |
| INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY UNIT | 32 | |
| TOTAL | | 643 |

²² Additional breakdown: Cabinet (11), Task forces “Permanent Premises for the Frontex Headquarters” and “ETIAS and Interoperability” (2), Brussels Office (3), Registration Office (5), Management Board and Cross-Divisional secretariat (2)

²³ Including Liaison Officer to Member States (11) and Third Countries (3)

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ANNEX 4 - Resources per activities – work programme 2018

4.1. European Integrated Border Management

- **IBM-1 EU integrated border management**
Guidance from the political (Council, Commission) enabling the development of technical and operational priorities to address by the different elements of a EU strategy of integrated border management
- **IBM-2 Frontex's technical and operational EU border management strategy**
The elements of the technical and operational EU strategy of integrated border management are developed and validated.
- **TRU-2 Training on IBM**
Providing training on IBM for senior officers.

| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR ²⁴ | FR ²⁵ |
|--|---|------------------|------------------|
| IBM-1 | Communication for the Commission on EU-integrated border management | | |
| IBM-2 | Technical and operational strategy adopted by Management Board | | |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR | FR |
| TRU - 3 | Trained officers able to implement national IBM strategies | 1 | 77,160.80 |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| Four courses held, benefitting 98 experts now trained to implement IBM strategies at national level. | | | |

²⁴ HR refers to human resources.

²⁵ FR refers to financial resources.

4.2. European cooperation on coast guard functions

- **TRU-3 Capacity building:** Contributing to the development of a practical handbook of European Cooperation on Coast Guard Functions and implementation of joint training activities among the 3 agencies with the participation in Tripartite Working Arrangement – Technical Subcommittee 2 (TSC 2)
- **FSC-4 Joint European Monitoring:** EFS, Copernicus services, as well as monitoring and communication services are provided in line with the operational needs of EU Agencies (including EFCA, EMSA, Europol etc.) and MSs and their close involvement
- **IEC-3 - Interagency-cooperation:** Ensuring strategic cooperation with EMSA and EFCA. Sound working level arrangements, service level agreements and operational guidelines are in place and implemented for multipurpose operations and information management between EU Agencies and MSs.
- **JOU-2 - European cooperation on Coast Guard Functions Concept:** the overall objective of the Concept is to support internally in the Agency and externally coherent implementation of the European cooperation on coast guard functions as assigned to the Agency by the regulation allowing to face firmly the challenges related to maritime domain by proving solid baseline and robust response.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|--|----|---------------|
| TRU - 3 | Functioning cooperation among the three agencies involved in coast guard functions | 1 | 1,765.05 |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| TRU nominated its representative who proactively participated in the meetings of the Tripartite Working Arrangement, Technical Subcommittee 2 related to the interagency cooperation in support of the European coast guard functions, for the implementation of programmes and projects in areas of mutual interest. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR | FR |
| IEC-3 | Effective cooperation between EMSA, EFCA and Frontex. | | ²⁶ |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| | | | |

²⁶ Reported under IEC-3 Cooperation with EU Institutions, offices, bodies and agencies and international organisations.

| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR | FR |
|---|---|-------------------------|---------|
| JOU-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overall collaboration among EMSA, EFCA and Frontex enhanced. - Areas of interest for services of the Agencies to be provided to MS' authorities carrying out defined coast guard functions. - European platform for debating and implementing coast guard function-related activities in the maritime domain. - Multipurpose operations concept in order to support coherent and cost-efficient action tested and applied. - Exchange and use of surveillance systems-generated data implemented. - Testing and use of various information exchange platforms in real operational scenarios. - Trainings and briefings successfully implemented. - Promotion of best practices applied. - Exchange of operational data and intelligence in close to real time. - Elaboration of standards. - Shared experiences and interagency cooperation further promoted. - Internal cross-divisional coordination maintained on the high level. | 4 FTE and 3 STM (ECGFO) | 346,000 |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| <p>Frontex took part together with EFCA, EMSA and Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Sweden in the Operation 'Baltic Tracking 2018' (17-30 September 2018). The aim was the establishment of a common 'Maritime Multi-risk Awareness' in the frame of BSRBCC with a focus on the implementation of the CGFs as border control, fisheries control, pollution control at sea, response to oil spills, SAR.</p> <p>CGS organised and implemented two SAR workshops within JO Poseidon. The aim was to enhance coordination and cooperation among all operational actors involved in SAR operations, as well as to boost capacity to save lives at sea and to improve the humanitarian response to those rescued at sea.</p> <p>In 2018, as a pilot project, STMs with European Coast Guard Functions Officer (ECGFO) profile were deployed in JO Poseidon (ICC Piraeus), JO Themis (ICC Rome) and JO Indalo (ICC Madrid). Additionally, one STM has been redeployed for a short period on board of EFCA OPV during the operation 'Baltic Tracking'.</p> | | | |

4.3. Operational Response

- **JOU-1 Focal points concept**

The focal points concept is composed of the joint operations focal points and coordination points.

Joint operations **focal points** will be implemented at the external EU air, land and sea Border Crossing Points (BCP) aiming to implement multipurpose operational activities at EU external borders via its permanent platforms to provide a sustained operational presence and information exchange/gathering in the areas exposed to the migratory pressure and cross-border crime.

Joint operations **coordination points** will be implemented in the respective third countries at the airports, land and sea BCP aiming at maintaining and further developing the platforms for exchange of information and experience related to the early detection of recent, actual and future illegal immigration trends towards the EU through the territory of the third countries.

The general aim of this concept is to further develop and intensify the implementation of multipurpose operational concepts, and to further develop the operational activities at air, sea and land borders as permanent platforms for providing sustaining operational presence and information exchange/gathering in the areas exposed to specific and disproportionate pressure. This is needed for the reinforcement at external borders when required by flexible operational activities and it constitutes a sustainable platform for tackling illegal activities, criminal networks and also for preventing cross-border crime, including the fight against migrant smuggling or trafficking in human beings and drug trafficking control operations as well for counter-terrorism measures and continuous strengthening the interagency cooperation and gaining border related intelligence.

With a view to contributing to an efficient, uniform and high-level border control, the focal points concept profoundly evolved in order to provide a platform for the implementation of joint operations/actions at the external borders involving, on a voluntary basis, one or more Member States and a third country, including on the territory of that third country, taking into consideration the foreseen conclusion of the relevant Status Agreements.

Modalities of cooperation and procedures for deployment of Frontex coordinated human resources and technical equipment in third countries have been further developed in the course of 2018. Additionally, the concept of JO coordination points has been extended in order to cover the sea borders with the establishment of coordination points in Albania, Georgia and Ukraine.

Focal points are selected for the activation according to the recommendations resulting from short/mid-term risk analysis reports delivered throughout the year, in order to respond in an effective and accurate manner to the threats at the external borders of the EU. Focal points can also be activated upon justification based on the MS national risk analysis. The operational activities at external land borders will be implemented according to risk analysis recommendations to support MSs at the external borders.

The main focus of the operational activities implemented at EU external land borders remained in the South Eastern and Western Balkan region.

- **JOU-2 Multipurpose Maritime Activities Concept**

The Multipurpose Maritime Activities (MMA) are composed of the joint maritime operations implemented at the Eastern, Central and Western Mediterranean regions as well as the Atlantic Ocean according to risk analysis in order to provide increased technical and operational assistance to the host MS national authorities at the external sea borders to control illegal immigration flows, to tackle cross-border crime and to enhance European cooperation on coast guard functions.

Respective coast guard functions and law enforcement related activities are incorporated in Frontex's joint operations in the field leading to the operationalisation of the European

cooperation on coast guard functions and fight against cross-border crime, in particular maritime safety, security, search and rescue, fisheries control, customs control, general law enforcement and environmental protection, in accordance with the EUROSUR objectives, the European Integrated Border Management (IBM) and the European Maritime Security Strategy.

- **JOU-3 Flexible operational activities concept**

Flexible operational activities are focusing on border surveillance, debriefing and screening activities as well as ensuring increased border check capacities at land and air BCPs.

The operational activities at external borders were implemented according to risk analysis recommendations and identified needs to support MS. Focus has been given to threats and vulnerabilities/needs identified at the external air borders.

Concerning the project 'Air Border Monitoring', the aim will be to establish additional operational tasks for EU officers deployed to key Third Countries under conditions set in the Status Agreement.

Frontex promoted effectively protection measures for vulnerable persons/groups (children and victims of trafficking in human beings) at the external air, land and sea borders from a law enforcement point of view. There were many developments regarding cooperation with third countries and with EU Agencies, non-governmental and international organisations (Europol, FRA, INTERPOL, UNHCR, and IOM) organising also public awareness sessions at the EU and third countries' airports.

In view of contributing to an efficient, high and uniform level of border control, SOPs were used to complement operational plans, covering all aspects considered necessary for implementing joint operations, including: procedures setting out the activation of a referral mechanism whereby persons in need of international protection, victims of trafficking in human beings, unaccompanied minors and persons in a vulnerable situation are directed to the competent national authorities for appropriate assistance; taking into account the special needs of children, victims of trafficking in human beings, persons in need of medical assistance, persons in need of international protection and persons in distress at sea and other persons in a particularly vulnerable situation.

In order to ensure the aforementioned measures, they have been included into the package provided by the Agency during joint operational activities addressing cross border crime and irregular migration.

- **JOU-4 Operational cooperation in the area of law enforcement**

Within the EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT, but also in the framework of other operational activities, Frontex established, maintained and further developed operational collaboration with the EU agencies, customs services and entities, as well as international organisations and regional initiatives.

Multipurpose joint operations were connected with activities under the Multiannual Strategic Plans and Operational Action Plans of the Policy Cycle using the EMPACT mechanism thus, based on tailored needs assessment, complementing the holistic approach to fight against illegal activities, criminal networks and also preventing cross border crime, including the fight against migrant smuggling, trafficking in human beings as well as illegal goods trafficking such as drugs. Joint action days fulfilment enhances the cooperation between various law enforcement actors responsible for the detection and prevention of the cross-border crime from the perspective of the EU external borders. Joint activities will also strengthen the effective cooperation with various partners in the field of migration management of mixed migratory flows and access to international protection and referral of vulnerable groups at the EU external border. Particular focus shall be given to the organisation of Joint Action Days (JAD) and the enhanced cooperation within the framework of Police Customs Cooperation Centres (PCCCs).

Frontex will further develop operational activities to support the fight against document fraud, including a stronger cooperation with FADO and INTERPOL and create a Centre of

Excellence for Combating Document Fraud.

Border guards/police and customs are strategic partners in border control tasks at the EU external borders. To better cope with the challenges and deliver their mandate in a more efficient way, the time has come to make border guards and customs work together in a systematic way in order to enhance the EU Internal Security.

Frontex has identified customs as an important partner in relation to the control of external borders, thus it is pertinent to establish a common working framework related to Frontex's activity, not only at institutional but also at operational level. To invite Customs experts to Frontex operational activities in 2018 and facilitate their contribution to objectives of tackling cross border crime, was a major step in contributing to the IBM concept on the operational level.

- **JOU-5 Additional products and services**

Products and services that can be delivered in addition and more tailored to products and services of the concepts mentioned before.

Activities under multipurpose maritime activities, including briefings, workshops and live events, involving the MS from the Black Sea, and other sea basins and the European Agencies (Frontex, EFCA and EMSA), in the framework of European cooperation on Coast Guard functions) are related to harmonisation, compatibility and interoperability seeking to further develop operational effectiveness and efficiency in coherence with the main recommendations and conclusions of the JOs.

Handbook of the Best Practices for the Land Borders' ICC procedures aimed at the harmonisation of Land Borders' ICC working procedures while the Handbook of the Best Practices for the Focal Points Local Coordinators procedures focused on the harmonisation of Focal Points Local Coordinators working procedures.

In March, CGS organised a meeting aimed at reviewing and updating the Handbook for Boarding in Frontex coordinated Joint Maritime Operations. Best practices and Guidelines

In March, CGS participated, in Lübeck (Germany) in the Workshop on Mobile Training Concept Boarding organised by DEU Chairmanship of ECGF Forum.

The Operational Heads of Airport Conference is an annual platform contributing to the enlargement of the coordination of operational cooperation at external air borders of the EU as well as with key third countries by increasing the awareness of operational heads of airports on the role and objectives of Frontex with specific focus on air border operational and capacity-building activities, actual risks, threats and vulnerabilities.

In relation to the Pilot **Investigation Support Activities on Cross-Border Crime (ISA-CBC)**, Frontex started to support MSs on cross-border crime investigations under the umbrella of Regulation (EU) 1624/2016, according to cross-border crime definition and requirements (serious crime, cross-border dimension and external borders). This specific support is granted out of the EMPACT/EU Policy Cycle Operational Actions platform, but is also organised under the umbrella of certain OAs and especially JADs. For the support of cross-border crime investigations led by Law Enforcement Units at national level, investments at Frontex are needed in relation to specific services, technical equipment, finances for operational meetings and operational advice/expertise from the perspective of the border protection. It therefore concerns both the facilitated illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings, but also the variety of all cross-border crimes, such as trafficking of firearms and ammunition, tobacco and alcohol products, stolen vehicles, drugs, fuel/energy products, environmental crime, etc. The presence in EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT in last years allowed to better understand the needs of the investigators. The tactical/strategic information acquired during the investigation support activities could result in new engagements in various EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT Priorities or shifting some operational undertakings to EMPACT OAPs in agreement with EU MS and/or Europol.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|------------------|----|----|
|-------------|------------------|----|----|

| | | | |
|---|--|----|--|
| JOU-1 | Under focal points concept the following operational activities were planned: -JO focal points –land; -JO focal points – air; -JO coordination – points land; -JO coordination – points air; -JO coordination – points sea; | 25 | 5,062,215 (land border 72.59%, air border 26.87%, sea border 0.54%) |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>JO Focal points land</p> <p>Launched on 31 January 2018 as a follow-up to joint operation focal points 2017. During the operation 47 focal points were established.</p> <p>New focal point established in Raigardas (LTU-BLR border).</p> <p>Increased deployments during FIFA 2018 World Cup and Joint Action Days and deployment of TM with new profile ‘Cross-Border Crime Detection Officer’.</p> <p>The number of man-days amounted to 17,226 as a result of the deployment of 594 Team Members (TMs) with various profiles providing effective support to the host Member States authorities during the border checks and information gathering activities. It is noteworthy that most of the TMs were deployed for longer periods than the minimum of 1 month. JO Focal Points hosted the deployment of 19 third country observers from 6 different non-EU countries.</p> <p>Operational results include 19,058 incidents reported among others the detection and apprehension of 3,021 irregular migrants attempting illegal border crossing as well as 2,163 falsified documents. Furthermore, the JO contributed to the detection of various incidents involving 48 facilitators and 1,351 smugglers of goods (ammunition, alcohol, cigarettes and drugs).</p> <p>Enhanced exchange of information between the Police and Customs Cooperation Centres (PCCCs) and the focal points was accomplished during the JO implementation. In total, 432 inquiries were sent by various focal points to PCCCs and led to the detection of 11 stolen vehicles, 26 false documents, 18 false stamps and 1 wanted person.</p> <p>Within the framework of the EU Policy Cycle/European multidisciplinary platform against criminal threats (EMPACT) 2018 JO Focal Points Land was utilised as a platform for implementation of operational activities in combating illegal migration and document fraud but also other serious cross border crimes such as excise fraud and various modalities of motor vehicle crime, including smuggling of stolen vehicles, parts of vehicles and the document fraud associating the phenomena.</p> <p>Joint Action Day Danube III organised under the umbrella of EU policy cycle/EMPACT and co-led by Frontex and Bulgaria as well as Lithuania was implemented in close cooperation with EU Member States (MSs), Europol and INTERPOL. The action was focused on facilitation of illegal immigration as well as organised crime groups smuggling of excise goods and also linked to document fraud cross-cutting EMPACT Priority.</p> <p>The following results were achieved during JAD Danube III:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2,168 irregular migrants • 23 facilitators • 63 document fraud cases • 31 stolen vehicles | | | |

- 510 kg of marijuana
- 332,550 cigarettes
- 2,950 Ancient Greek coins
- 12 tons of raw tobacco
- 20,000 fake labels for counterfeit clothing

Joint Action Day Mobile was organised by Frontex and co-led by Germany, Greece, Poland and Europol. The investigative action was focused on tackling motor vehicle crime via EU external borders and the document fraud associating this phenomenon. This activity was also combined with tackling the facilitation of illegal immigration and related document fraud.

The following results were achieved during JAD Mobile:

- 4,535 irregular migrants
- 139 facilitators
- 202 identity document fraud cases
- 33 vehicle-related document fraud cases
- 500 stolen vehicles; 26 motorcycles; 324 stolen vehicle parts
- 712 kg of heroin
- 547 kg of cannabis
- 825,099 cigarettes
- 7 handguns
- 2 gas pistols
- 506 bullets/cartridges

In addition, Joint Action Day Western Balkans was co-lead by Frontex and implemented as joint activity between 4 EMPACT priorities (Firearm, facilitated illegal immigration with its component of document fraud and drugs).

The following results were achieved during JAD Western Balkans:

- Firearms: 50 arrestees
- Facilitated illegal immigration: 90 arrestees
- Document fraud: 23 arrestees
- Drugs: 41 arrestees

JO Focal points – air

In total 157 EU/SAC/TC officers were deployed, for a total of 3,887 deployment days at the 26 EU/SAC which participated in the implementation of the joint operation.

The deployed officers reported 874 detected incidents involving 1,461 persons, 317 refusals, 716 asylum seekers, 16 facilitators and 6 over stayers. In addition 1,360 false or falsified

documents were reported as well as 4 foreign terrorist fighters/militant Islam profiles were identified.

Joint operation focal points – air 2018 delivered the following main benefits:

- positive impact on the operational cooperation among the European and third countries' airports based on the exchanged experiences and established contacts;
- increased knowledge about different operational practices in Member States and third countries;
- increased knowledge in Member States and third countries about Frontex's operational activities and its values;
- increased response capacity of Frontex having permanent the focal point structure established;
- enhanced exchange of smart practices at managerial level by deployment of intermediate managers.

JO Coordination points – Air

Forty-five EU officers were deployed, for total of 1,771 deployment days at 14 third country hosting airports which participated in the implementation of the joint operation.

The deployed officers reported 440 detected incidents involving 773 persons, 538 refusals, 17 asylum seekers, 13 facilitators and 4 over stayers. In addition, 571 false or falsified documents were also reported.

The joint operation acted as a permanent platform for providing a sustained operational presence and information exchange/gathering system at air borders by deploying regular officers and intermediate managers as EU advisers/observers at third country airports to the activated coordination point airports.

Joint operation coordination points – air 2018 delivered the following main benefits:

- positive impact on the operational cooperation among EU and TC airports based on the exchanged experiences and established contacts;
- increased knowledge about different operational practices in Member States and third countries;
- increased knowledge in Member States and third countries about Frontex's operational activities and its values;
- increased response capacity of Frontex having permanent focal point structure established.
- enhanced exchange of smart practices at managerial level by deployment of intermediate managers.

JO coordination points – Land

Implemented between 27 February and 4 December 2018 in 9 non-EU Countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Montenegro, Serbia and Ukraine). Seventeen Member States/Schengen-associated countries (SACs) deployed 115 experts and Seconded Team members (profile Advanced-Level Document Officers /Stolen Vehicle Detection Officer/Second Line Officer/Dog Handler) as observers in 17 Coordination Points.

In total, 813 incidents, involving 49 irregular migrants were reported in JORA. There were 99 cases of smuggling of goods and 76 cases concerning use of false or falsified documents. Furthermore, one person was detected as a foreign fighter during the implementation period of the JO Coordination Points 2018 Land.

Effective practical cooperation and networking between the local coordinators of JO Focal Points and Coordination Points was in place aiming at gaining experience and mutual exchange of information and best practices.

| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR | FR |
|---|---|------|---|
| JOU-2 | Joint maritime operations implemented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - JO Poseidon 2018 (Greece) - JO Themis 2018 (Italy) - JO Indalo 2018 (Spain) - JO Minerva 2018 (Spain) - JO Hera 2018 (Spain) | 52 | 97,859,347 (100% allocated to sea border sector) |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| <p>Five joint maritime activities have been implemented in 2018 resulting in the deployment of 8,241 officers delivering 1,241 operational days. Three MS hosted and 28 MS participated by deploying their resources in the maritime JOs. In addition, 16 third country observers were deployed by Frontex in 2018. Deployed experts of various profiles including interpreters performed 233,189 operational working-days. In addition, crewmembers delivered 154,045 operational human -days. Both figures include the host MS human resources co-financed by Frontex.</p> <p>Technical equipment (seaborne and airborne) deployed by Frontex delivered 64,993 patrolling hours. In addition, the terrestrial assets were deployed to enhance the border surveillance in Greece and Italy.</p> <p>In total, 117,966 irregular migrants were intercepted during the joint maritime operations 2018 as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 55,900 migrants - JO Indalo (Western Mediterranean), - 37,335 migrants - JO Poseidon (Eastern Mediterranean) - 23,211 migrants - JO Triton/Themis (Central Mediterranean) - 772 migrants - JO Minerva (Western Mediterranean) <p>Besides, Frontex has provided substantial technical and operational assistance in Search and Rescue (SAR) and combatting cross-border crime.</p> <p>In particular, the following results were reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 37,000 migrants rescued in SAR cases with any type of Frontex involvement in sea operations; - 273 incidents involving smuggling activities and 700 suspected smugglers apprehended; - 3,283,522 kilograms of drugs seized; - 28,336,595 pieces of cigarettes seized; - 10 suspected sea pollution cases; - Over 1,442 fisheries sighting forms have been submitted to European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and national authorities; - 2 incidents on suspected illegal fisheries. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| JOU-3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -JO Flexible Operational Activities Land on border surveillance; -JO Flexible Operational Activities Land on border checks -JO Alexis I, II, III and IV -JO Pegasus - Project Air Border Monitoring -JO Vega Children I and II | 33.5 | 13,341,072 (91.18% land border and 8.82% air border) |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | -Vega Handbook Land (focusing on land borders) -Vega Handbook (focusing on maritime dimension) translated to all EU languages | | |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>JO Flexible Operational Activities Land on border surveillance 2018</p> <p>Launched on 31 January, as a follow-up to the JO Flexible Operational Activities Land on Border Surveillance 2017 (FOA BCU). Five MSs hosted the operation, namely Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary, Croatia and Romania.</p> <p>Members of the teams were not deployed to the BCUs of LCCs' Croatia and Romania. These LCCs were included in the operational plan to ensure situational monitoring of these border areas which was achieved through JORA reporting.</p> <p>A new LCC has been established and activated at the operational area at GRC-ALB border where fully fledged activities including intelligence gathering were implemented, while LCC Moravita at ROU-SRB border has been established as new monitoring area.</p> <p>A total of 1,780 team members were deployed within the JO along with 312 internally deployed border police officers for border surveillance. Deployments of team members per profile were as follows: 1,368 border surveillance officers, 79 dog handlers, 62 debriefing experts, 30 screening experts as well as 94 Frontex Support Officers and 103 interpreters.</p> <p>Furthermore, 38 officers from non-EU countries were deployed as observers in the framework of JO FOA 2017 BCU.</p> <p>During the JO implementation, the following results were reported at the South-Eastern EU land borders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 1,919 illegal border-crossing incidents, - 16,248 irregular migrants apprehended and 336 facilitators arrested. - the operational results in the Western Balkans area included 456 illegal border-crossing incidents involving the apprehension of 2,292 irregular migrants and 40 facilitators. <p>Initial steps were taken for planning in order to implement fully-fledged operational activities, including the intelligence gathering in Albania and FYROM, following the entry into force of the respective Status Agreements.</p> <p>JO Flexible Operational Activities Land on Border Checks</p> <p>The JO was launched on 31 January 2018 as a follow up of the previous year activity.</p> <p>Thirty-eight seconded team members (STMs), with three different profiles, namely Second Line Officers (SLO), Stolen Vehicle Detection Officers (SVDO), Advanced-Level Document Officer (ALDO) were deployed at selected Focal Points in 10 MSs providing operational support in border checks with a focus on the detection of false/falsified documents, stolen cars, clandestine detections and intelligence gathering, thus advancing the identification of possible risks and threats and increased situational awareness across the mainly affected land border areas. Furthermore, the possibility to deploy and redeploy TMs in a flexible way allowed for responding faster to the border-related challenges faced at the specific focal points. Incident reporting</p> | | | |

of this operational activity was integrated in JO focal points, hence the operational results are reflected therein.

JO Alexis

Joint Operation Alexis 2018 was implemented in four different phases at 37 airports of the EU Member States. In total 23 Member States, seven third countries and 37 participating airports took part in the implementation of Joint Operation Alexis 2018. To support Alexis operational activities, INTERPOL deployed 5 IBMTF (Integrated Border Management Task Force) coordinators; Phase 2 – 2 coordinators at Lisbon Airport, Phase 3 – coordinator at Faro Airport and within Phase 2 at Amsterdam - Schiphol.

During the Joint Operation, 87 officers (including 11 third-country observers) were deployed at different airports according to the operational needs for a total of 2,690 working-days covering the profiles of Second-Line Airport Officer and/or Advanced-Level Document Officer.

The main aim of the activities undertaken within the framework of Joint Operation Alexis 2018 was to strengthen the operational capabilities of EU airports to address the perceived vulnerabilities/needs. By applying the VEGA Handbook and the Standard Operational Procedures provided in the annexes of the operational plans, 11,878 specific countermeasures were implemented during the Alexis 2018 operational activities.

During the JO the main threats as well as new aspects regarding irregular migration flows were reported. The information provided by the participating airports greatly assisted Frontex Risk Analysis Unit in highlighting new and emerging trends.

Joint Operation Alexis 2018 provided:

- tailored operational support and capacity building;
- strengthening Member States operational capabilities in order to overcome perceived vulnerabilities;
- effective & efficient operational response to perceived vulnerabilities meeting current threats (European Situational Awareness) enhancing security of external air borders;
- increased response capacity to emergency situations.

JO Pegasus 2018

A total of 6 Member States with seven participating airports took part in the implementation of Joint Operation Pegasus 2018. During the implementation, five officers were deployed at these airports according to operational need for a total of 530 working -days covering the profiles of Second-Line Interview Officer and/or Advanced-Level Document Officer.

In particular, the deployment of the two officers from INTERPOL deployed at one of the participating airports was very successful due to the high number of hits on incoming passengers.

The seven participating airports reported 230 validated incidents involving a total of 461 persons as well as a total number of 380 unlawfully used travel/supportive documents and visas.

The added value of Joint Operation Pegasus 2018 consisted of increasing mutual awareness concerning new modus operandi related to irregular migration as well as some emerging trends. It also highlighted some aspects of cross-border crime and related irregular migratory phenomena at the EU's external air borders, some of them being already observed in the framework of other **Frontex** Joint Operations.

JO Pegasus delivered the following main benefits:

- enhancing border security and preventing illegal immigration by targeting facilitated irregular migration and trafficking in human beings by air and identifying organised crime groups (OCGs) responsible;
- gathering intelligence, which could also facilitate further identification of the responsible OCGs and supporting Member States' criminal investigations through Europol;
- improving intelligence/knowledge picture;
- enhancing cooperation at the national and EU level, and that between the EU Agencies (Frontex and Europol) and INTERPOL;
- raising awareness of the common risk indicators in respect of foreign terrorist fighters or those linked to militant Islam.

JO VEGA Children 2018

In total 14 Member States and 6 third countries participated in the joint operation with 23 participating hosting airports and with 42 officers deployed (26 TMs, 2 EU advisers and 14 third-country observers) in mixed teams along with nine representatives of two international organisations. During the joint operation there were 19 confirmed cases of unaccompanied minors being detected. During both phases of the operation six people were suspected of being involved in child smuggling. Prior to the operation the Frontex Team members, IO experts and the airports representatives were briefed and appraised about the risks associated with the practice which is unlawful in the EU.

For awareness raising purposes and promoting effective protection measures for vulnerable persons/groups (children and victims of trafficking in human beings) at external air borders, in the frame of this joint operation three awareness sessions were organised, all at the Oslo Airport.

Project Air Border Monitoring

In 2018, the project was kept frozen. During the evaluation of the original Flight Tracking Project in 2014 participating MSs pointed out that alerting activity at air borders adds value in case certain personal data of the concerned passengers could be also communicated in the alerts. In 2017, the assessment of the project was made with the support of Frontex LPU, considering the new mandate of the EBCGA. The assessment outcome suggests that personal data in this regard could only be collected autonomously by MSs authorities and continuation of the project would require Frontex to integrate the Airline Liaison Officers deployed to third countries.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|----|--------------|
| JOU-4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -project reference manual online (nominated FIELDS in course of 2018); -PP Reference Manual; -enhanced support in the field of document fraud; -involvement in EU Policy Cycle Priority by supporting Operational Actions and JADs. | 10 | 1,085,665.42 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>The phase 2 of FIELDS (Frontex INTERPOL Electronic Library Document System) project was dedicated to define the business and technical requirements of a transactional system integrating in the frontline databases the Frontex Quick Check Cards. The interagency project team concluded the phase in cooperation with six EU MS/SAC (France, Italy, Hungary, the Netherlands, Portugal and Romania), two INTERPOL member countries having signed working arrangements with the agency (Albania and Canada) and the General Secretariat of the Council of the EU.</p> <p>The Frontex database on documents was further improved in quality and quantity of the images during 7 Workshops (total number of documents 4,204, the total of quick check cards 192 translated in 10 EU languages) also thanks to the newly established Frontex's document alert procedures and templates. Furthermore, the quick check card product was aligned with the developments of the business and technical specifications of FIELDS project.</p> <p>The centre organised EXP DOC plenary and dedicated meetings, including field missions.</p> <p>Frontex document experts contributed to five sessions of the Council of European Union False-DOC WP, four General Secretariat of the Council of EU working meetings, thirteen external conferences, thirteen EMPACT meeting/conferences, three Joint Action Days, three Research & Innovation Workshops, four training workshops, providing also support to Risk Analysis and Frontex Liaison Officers activities.</p> <p>The document experts of the Document Fraud Task Force were deployed 39% of the working days (including FDU's briefings, road shows and Joint Action Days).</p> <p>LES on EU Policy Cycle</p> <p>In 2018, Frontex led, co-led and participated in 57 various Operational Actions under EU Policy Cycle leading or co-leading 22 of them. Moreover, the Agency joined the Drugs EMPACT Priority for the first time focusing on the support to EU MS and Europol in the area of counteraction of cocaine, heroin and cannabis trafficking via EU external borders. First actions with EBCGA participation will be launched in 2019. This marks already the 8th EMPACT Priority with Frontex's engagement making the Agency a fully recognisable law enforcement actor in the EU. In autumn 2018, the Agency took an active part in the operational action plans drafting for all related EMPACT priorities for 2019 as well.</p> <p>Many operational actions are also supported by the Frontex's Fusion Services, analytical and surveillance tools provision, as well as training-related activities.</p> <p>Regarding the Frontex's co-ordinated JADs the following summaries shall reflect the operational success under the EMPACT/ Policy Cycle umbrella:</p> <p>JAD Danube 3, was implemented from 11-22 June 2018, focusing on facilitation of illegal immigration, trafficking in human beings, and excise fraud and document fraud associated to the facilitated illegal immigration and THB OAs. It was co-led by Bulgaria and Lithuania (in this case by customs authorities). For the first time, this action was co-led by customs authorities contributing with the enhanced control measures at the EU external borders along with border guard officers.</p> | | | |

The aim of this JAD was to tackle facilitated irregular migration, as well as, to detect the cases of smuggling of excise goods and document fraud use. A joint Frontex-Europol risk analysis was prepared prior to the action and Frontex deployed JAD tailored European Border Guard Team Members at selected border crossing points at the EU's external land borders, along with customs authorities from several Member States and third countries, Europol and INTERPOL experts.

The Coordination Centre that was set by Frontex in Bulgaria summarised 23 migrant smugglers arrested; 63 fraudulent documents detected; 510kg of drugs, 330,000 cigarettes and 12 tons of tobacco seized; 31 stolen vehicles recovered. Frontex officers also supported the detection of more than 2,160 irregular migrants and 580 persons staying in the EU illegally.

JAD Mobile was held between 24 September and 7 October 2018. The action was focused upon stolen vehicles, illegal immigration and document fraud. The JAD was co-led by Europol, Germany, Greece and Poland. The Coordination Centre was established at Frontex HQ for the first time and was attended by 16 MS, 4 third countries, INTERPOL, CELBET and Europol. Europol supported the action in the field as well with its unique tools and helped to enhance the SIENA related data exchange between the actors involved. This JAD delivered significant operational results and detected: 500 stolen vehicles; 26 motorcycles; 324 stolen vehicle parts; 202 identity document fraud cases; 33 vehicle related document fraud cases; 7 handguns; 712 kg heroin in one seizure in Bulgaria (largest ever seizure of heroin at Kapitan Andreevo) and 547 kg of marijuana/hashish/skunk/cannabis.

JAD Olympus has been implemented between 8 and 21 October 2018. The JAD was co-led with France and was focusing on document fraud and Illegal immigration with particular reference to the forgery and misuse of EU national identity documents. JAD Olympus has been implemented based on the platform of Frontex's coordinated air Joint Operation (JO) Pegasus 2018, with the additional deployment of document fraud experts at selected airports. Ten airports were selected based on a tailored risk analysis.

Key operational outcome: 19 arrests (one facilitator of illegal immigration identified; one trafficker identified); 84 forged / counterfeit documents (visa, passport, ID); 61 incidents of document fraud detected and 29 refusal entries; 55 genuine documents held by impostors detected. 50,000 passengers were checked against the INTERPOL Nominal database which resulted in three hits and one arrest.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|---|-----|------------|
| JOU-5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -best practices on Land border's ICC procedures; -focal/ coordination points staff exchange; -the boarding working group; -Operational Heads of Airports Conference -facilitation activities at operational level with air carriers and airports (conferences, workshops, seminars, operational activities) | 7.5 | 464,418.50 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Best practices on land border's ICC procedures – the electronic version of the handbook was distributed to all land border ICCs and fully implemented thus harmonizing the Land Borders' ICC working procedures.</p> <p>Best Practices on Focal Points Local Coordinators – the draft handbook was revised based on the input from the local coordinators.</p> <p>Focal/coordination points staff exchange programme was maintained with the aim to enhance the cooperation and exchange of information as well as best practices among the Focal as well as coordination points. In total 11 Home MSs with 27 Teams and 8 TCs with 12 Teams participated in the exchange while 9 Host MSs and 1 TC hosted the visit of Staff Exchange Teams.</p> <p>Operational Heads of Airports Conference</p> <p>The Operational Heads of Airports Conference is organised by Frontex every year for operational commanders responsible for border control at international airports in order to further promote the value of cooperation in the field of Integrated Border Management.</p> <p>The aim of the Conference is to facilitate personal contacts between the operational leaders of international airports. Furthermore, it is a good opportunity for delegates to discuss issues of shared interest and be updated on the latest developments in the field of air border integrated management. The conference was attended by 139 officials Commanders of Border Guard Services at airports and Organisations' Representatives. The conference went smoothly with declared satisfaction of several delegations. No relevant issues were identified and the participants were very satisfied with the event. Frontex's staff presented the activities planned for 2018, answering to the questions and clarifications requested by the participants. In addition, the new Frontex's organigram was presented and the responsibilities of newly created units and sectors. Risk Analysis Unit and other speakers reported on the challenges faced nowadays by airport border guards. Comprehensive information on Schengen Evaluation and Monitoring Mechanism, Frontex Vulnerability Assessment, EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT activities, Fundamental Rights and children was provided with specific emphases on travel documents. In addition, there was underlined the importance of the cooperation with TCs within air border domain.</p> <p>In March, CGS organised a meeting aimed at reviewing and updating the Handbook for Boarding in Frontex-Coordinated Joint Maritime Operations: Best Practices and Guidelines.</p> <p>In March, CGS participated, in Lübeck (Germany) in the Workshop on Mobile Training Concept Boarding organised by DEU Chairmanship of ECGF Forum.</p> | | | |
| Divisional support costs related to JOU 1,2,3,4,5 - EUR 7,545,824.08 | | | |

4.4. Return Activities

ECRet-1 Return Support – Operational Concept

Frontex will enhance the practical cooperation on return by increasing the numbers of return operations (national and joint) to destinations based on request from MS for assistance and coordination. The Rolling Operational Plan via the web based platform FAR will allow for day-to-day updates of MS requests for assistance and coordination.

In parallel, Frontex will increase pre-return assistance to MS and facilitate operational cooperation with third countries, in particular identification of third-country nationals, acquisition of travel documents and networking.

Missions to/from third countries may be organised to hold operational, technical talks/negotiations with local authorities on behalf of / together with MS.

The activities will also cover the organisation and implementation of third country identification missions for identification, verification purpose and facilitation of the acquisition of travel documents.

Frontex will support capacity building on return, incl. development of a return case management system model and training, with appropriate levels of targeted specialised courses, workshops and seminars.

Frontex will ensure the technical and operational coordination of return-related activities of MS to achieve an integrated system of return management among competent authorities of MS, with the participation of relevant authorities of third countries and other relevant stakeholders. Frontex will aim at building synergies and connecting with Union-funded networks and programmes in close cooperation with COM and other relevant stakeholders. Frontex will be actively engaged in further development of the structure and content of IRMA and the use of this application. The role of Frontex Direct Contact Points on return and Pre-Return Activities Network will be further enhanced as part of the operational coordination of return management and for the exchanging of operational experience and knowledge in return matters.

Frontex will continue in the process of phase-in/phase-out of the Eurint and EURLO programs. Other activities from the Eurint's portfolio will be fully taken over. Feasibility of the take-over of the EURLO's network will be further explored, incl. through the implementation of a pilot project.

Frontex will provide technical and operational return assistance to MS subject to particular pressure on their return systems.

Upon requests of MS, Frontex will deploy individual experts from the return pools or constitute European return intervention teams.

Support MS in the organisation and implementation of returns by scheduled flights via possible framework agreement with carriers for the purchase of seats at special condition according to targeted technical requirements based on MS needs.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|----|------------|
| ECRet-1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 300 forced return operations; - return operations on voluntary departure; - readmission operations in accordance with the EU/Turkey agreement; - enhanced support in the identification process and in obtaining of travel documents; - improved response to MS' return needs. | 43 | 49,403,080 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Return operations</p> <p>Returns by scheduled flights - Frontex Pilot Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since the launch of the pilot project 1,476 third-country nationals have been returned to 49 destinations by 17 Member States; • The number of participating Member States is constantly increasing with their preference to use the mechanism in line with the national systems; • There are currently no geographical limitations regarding returns by scheduled flights coordinated and co-financed by Frontex. Operations are booked and coordinated according to Member States' needs using all available routes. <p>The smooth running of the project is largely due to special agreements Frontex has achieved with different airlines. By the end of 2018, already 16 air carriers cooperated with ECRet with especially dedicated fares and operational conditions, which makes the use of Frontex's Returns by scheduled flights the most efficient way to carry out this kind of operations.</p> <p>Return operations by charter flights organised or coordinated by Frontex</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 345 return operations were organised or coordinated with the support of Frontex. • 12,245 third-country nationals were returned on charter flights in return operations organised or coordinated by Frontex. Almost half of returnees (6,099) were returned on joint return operations, while 3,717 persons on national return operations and 2,438 on collecting return operations. • Four new destinations have been reached: Burkina Faso, Belarus, Senegal and Guinea-Bissau. In total, 38 destinations were reached, compared to 32 countries reached in 2017. • Increasing interest by Member States in the Collecting Return Operations. The number of these operations has increased by almost 76% in 2018 as compared to 2017. <p>Readmission operations from Greece to Turkey under the EU-Turkey Statement</p> <p>Frontex continued to support the implementation of the EU-Turkey Statement by coordinating the deployments of human resources and providing technical assistance by chartering ferries, aircrafts and buses. 322 third country nationals were readmitted: 213 non-EU nationals on ferry boats and 109 Syrian nationals on planes.</p> <p>Deployment of monitors and escorts from the Frontex return pools</p> <p>Upon Member State request, Frontex can deploy forced-return monitors and forced-return escorts made available by other Member States as members of dedicated pools, to support return operations.</p> | | | |

- In 2018, the Frontex pool of forced-return monitors reached 66 monitors contributed by 21 Member States;
- 231 out of 345 return operations by charter flights in 2018 were carried out with a monitor on board: 159 of these operations were monitored by monitors from the Frontex pool;
- The pool of forced-return escorts consist of 446 people from 24 Member States.

Framework Contract (FWC) for chartering aircrafts

Upon Member States' request or on its own initiative, Frontex provides aircrafts for national or joint return operations by charter flights as well as readmission operations by air, either by chartering them within a dedicated Frontex framework contract or by requesting other available Member States to charter an aircraft. In 2018, the Agency chartered 13 aircrafts: 6 for return operations, 2 for connecting flights and 5 for readmission operations.

Frontex Application for Returns (FAR), is a dedicated web-based application for sharing operational information among Member States and Frontex for planning and implementing return operations by both charter and scheduled flights.

- A FAR module on scheduled flights has been developed and implemented, becoming an integrated part of FAR accessible for all Member States' use;
- the new FAR module on scheduled flights can be used to request flight tickets at special operational conditions reserved to Frontex;
- three new versions of the FAR module on charter flights were released in order to incorporate new features and functionalities;
- the FAR finance module was also released during 2018 and is now in regular use;
- a mobile version of FAR is currently being developed to be ready by 2019.

Common standards: Code of Conduct for Return Operations and Return Interventions

- In April 2018, the revised Code of Conduct for Return Operations and Return Interventions coordinated or organised by Frontex was adopted.
- The purpose of the document is to raise and harmonise ethical standards during return operations in order to provide a coherent and comprehensive response to challenges in returning non-EU nationals.
- The Code is applicable and binding for all participants during all return operations coordinated or organised by Frontex. It was developed in cooperation with the Frontex Fundamental Rights Office and Consultative Forum.

Identification process:

- in 2018, ECRet organised 12 identification missions in total involving 7 non-EU countries (NEU) and 7 MS. These identification missions resulted in 1519 interviewed non-EU nationals (NEUNs), 881 identified NEUNs and 402 ETDs issued.
- In cooperation with the EURLO project a pilot has been set up in 2018 to facilitate video conferencing equipment for identification purposes and to support the consular cooperation in the area of identification and documentation of AFG nationals under the EU-AFG arrangement 'Joint Way Forward'.
- Recognising the reluctance of some non-EU countries to cooperate with the Agency on returns, ECRet organised 5 visits of non-EU countries (NEU) aiming to familiarise them and make them acquainted with the general mandate and tasks of the Agency on migration management with a focus on returns. Two of the visits were combined with a Consular Workshop, where Consuls of the relevant non-EU countries in the EU were invited in a meeting with their own central authorities and interested MS to discuss and address challenges on identification and return.
- A Frontex-GIN 'Best Practices' was concluded in July 2018. The 'Best Practices' are falling under the umbrella of the EU-GIN signed 'Good practices on return and readmission' and serves as technical and operational guidelines for the implementation of return related activities. Discussion with COD are ongoing.

Cooperation with other partners:

- Cooperation with the EU-funded projects is ongoing. For the Eurint, the phase-in/phase-out is reaching its final phase. Full integration of Eurint activities are foreseen by end of 2019. In cooperation with EURLO a pilot project has been initiated, testing the deployment by a NOR EURLO under Frontex flag to GHA with regional coverage as of April 2018. This will provide input as to the feasibility of the takeover of the EURLO project by Frontex in the future. Involvement in GHA and the region, including GMB, is increasing. Cooperation between ECRet and ERRIN has been established. Steps have been taken to work towards the possibilities of integration of (some parts of) ERRIN activities in Frontex.
- ECRet and EASO are working on further closing the gap between the asylum and the return procedure, in particular in the field of alignment of knowledge platforms, with a focus to streamline the return related content and format of EASO's Information and Documentation System (IDS) with the IRMA platform, which has been taken over from COM by ECRet as of 2019. This should ensure easier access user-friendliness for the MS users.
- In order to facilitate the cooperation between ECRet and IOM, an initial meeting took place to identify the different mandates, work streams, and procedures. Different areas of interest have been identified by both ECRet and IOM as topics for further in-depth discussion and exploration for possibilities for cooperation. Follow-up meetings will be planned in the near future. This should ensure better cooperation and alignment in relevant procedures affecting voluntary and non-voluntary return for the MS.

Return specialists and language support

- In 2018, RS were deployed to Bulgaria (BGR), Germany (DEU) and Greece (GRC). In GRC and BGR, RS were continuously deployed throughout the year with specific profiles based on the host MS requirements. In DEU two RS were deployed simultaneously to support the preparation of return operations by using the Frontex Application for Returns (FAR) scheduled and charter flights modules.
- In terms of language support, a part-time interpreter (in cooperation with JO POSEIDON) supported (pre) return related activities including identification interviews. The interpreter focussing in particular on Pakistani cases and also supported return and readmission operations.

ICT

- ECRet developed a reference model-RECAMAS in 2018. The reference model is in effect a blueprint of an ideal RECAMAS. The centre supports MS to bring their national systems more in line with the model. A first (beta) version has been released at the beginning of 2018 and a new version is ready to be published in January 2019.
- Throughout 2018, ECRet initiated activities with AUT, BEL and GRC. Lessons learnt have been collected and will be taken into account when opening the project to all MS in 2019. The development of an interface between the Austrian national RECAMAS and FAR was initiated in September 2018.
- With the handover of IRMA (IRMA 1.0) from DG HOME by ECRet by the end of 2018, several key steps were taken by ECRet to ensure the business continuity of the platform. Hosting, development and maintenance of IRMA were secured, as well as the establishment of the service desk team. This included the necessary recruitment of human resources and their subsequent training.
- Finally, a dedicated analyst has been recruited for redesigning IRMA (IRMA 2.0), as the platform will eventually have to be replaced or upgraded.

4.5. Risk Analysis

- **RAU-01 Strategic risk analysis products services and maintenance of analytical tools for their delivery**
 - To provide platforms for information exchange and joint analytical work by Frontex and Member States, including establishment of Maritime Intelligence Community Risk Analysis Network, in order to generate and share in-depth knowledge and up-to-date situational awareness (products and services included in the “expected results”) achieved also through the constant development of methodology for risk analysis.
 - To enable access to databases and tailored monitoring services as sources for analytical assessments. Continued work on updating and extending the FRAN and EDF-RAN indicators, including to cover cross-border crime contributing to enhanced situational picture.
 - Update of CIRAM as a result of selected aspects of the EBCG Regulation, and rollout activities.
- **RAU-02 Third-country analysis products, services and maintenance of analytical tools for their delivery**
 - Third-country Risk Analysis Networks, third-country monitoring and other related activities are the platforms and means for access and exchange of up to date information and analysis with and on third countries, enabling situation awareness on the irregular migration situation in third countries affecting EU external borders and the delivery of products and services listed under ‘Expected results’. ²⁷
 - Delivery of up to date situational awareness for continuous scanning of external threats for vulnerability assessment purposes, and to support the update of the impact levels for the external border sections.
 - Continuous assessment and enhancement of information sources, including access to outsourced monitoring services.
 - Finalisation of third-country monitoring methodology to cover all fields of Frontex work (cross-border crime, terrorism, returns and coast guard function).
 - Extension of access possibilities to third country-monitoring products.
 - Practical risk analysis training to enable joint analytical work in the third country risk analysis networks.
- **RAU-03 Operational risk analysis services, products including tools for operational analysis**
 - Operational analysis products and services are delivered in order to provide situation awareness and advice for the planning implementation monitoring and evaluation of joint operations, pilot projects and EBGCT.
 - The continuation of Air Border Risk Analysis network to provide situation awareness and support to air operations.

²⁷ Throughout 2018, the activities of Africa Frontex Intelligence Community will be partly implemented and enhanced through the implementation of the dedicated DG Devco grant.

- **RAU-04 Intelligence coordination including processing of personal data for risk analysis purposes**
 - To manage the effective collection of actionable information, through the management of joint debriefing teams, Intelligence Officers, and of related information flows, from emerging hotspots or border areas subject to high border management pressures.
 - To collecting and process, in a law-enforcement context, personal data relating to suspects of crime in order to support risks analyses and Frontex operations, as well as for transmission to Member States and EU law enforcement agencies such as Europol & Eurojust.
- **RAU-05 Processing personal data for migration management**, Collecting and processing personal data relating to individuals detected for unauthorised crossing of the border whose data is collected by EBCG Teams to support Frontex return activities, the EASO and the competent authorities of the Member States.
- **RAU-06 Informing EU policies and regulations with risk analysis. Support to EMPACT**, Regular and *ad-hoc* analytical input, reports, information and data are provided to DG Home and other EU institutions in the implementation of relevant regulations and policies.
- **RAU-07 Informing Frontex Management stakeholders and Frontex policies with risk analysis**, *ad-hoc* analytical briefing to internal Frontex stakeholders as required
- **RAU-08 Centralised Data Management, GIS Analysis and Technical Support to Risk Analysis**
 - Provision of technical services enabling and supporting risk analysis and vulnerability assessment such as data and GIS analysis, business intelligence, building risk analysis capacity in Frontex, Member States and cooperating third countries, access to open source information and intelligence.
 - Coordination and exploitation of land earth observation services financed under Copernicus Delegation Agreement, for risk analysis and vulnerability assessment.
 - Manage the project for the development and implementation of a Vulnerability Assessment Technological Platform ('VA-Platform') to support, from a technological point of view, the implementation of the Vulnerability Assessment activities.
- **RAU-09 Risk analysis Eurosur specific services and products**, to deliver the risk analysis layer of the CPIP/ESP, as required by the EUROSUR regulation.
- **RAU-10 Vulnerability Assessment**, implementation of the Common Vulnerability Assessment Methodology (CVAM), in regular consultations with Member States and in collaboration with Risk Analysis Unit and integrating liaison officers' contributions. Revision of the CVAM. Monitoring of the implementation of recommended measures. Dissemination of the results of the vulnerability assessments as required in the Regulation. Development of projects ²⁸. Work on the quantification of the CVAM objective criteria.

²⁸ The financial resources for the projects are included under RAU-08, also the Human Resources that will be implementing the project. The HR responsible for the management of the project is included under Vulnerability Assessment.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|---|-------|------------|
| RAU-01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 FRAN meetings implemented; - 2 induction trainings; - guest analyst workshops; - 4 FRAN quarterly reports issued, with public release versions; - regular analysis on Intra Schengen movements and in support of return activities delivered in periodical and dedicated tailored products; - EDF-ARA; - 3 EDF meetings; - tailored EDF product packages; - launch of Maritime Intelligence Community Risk Analysis Network; - annual risk analysis package - stakeholders participation in the annual risk analysis process; - regular monthly products; - updates of situation at the external borders; - THB Handbook package; - thematic workshops with THB experts; - Common Risk Indicators Package; - indicators updated/extended as agreed with stakeholders; - updated CIRAM. | 12.25 | 601,647.88 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>FRAN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All four FRAN meetings implemented as planned providing a forum for discussion on irregular migratory trends and updates on RAU activities (April, June, September & December) with an average participation of 30 Member States/Schengen associated countries, and the European Commission, EASO and Europol. - Monitoring of the quality and timeliness of information upload. Resolving technical problems and responding to queries. - One technical training on dashboards with the participation of 24 MSs, following the extension of FRAN information exchange implemented as of January 2018 (new breakdowns, update of definitions, flat template). One FRAN template technical workshop. One induction training for FRAN members, combined with dashboard technical training. - Intra Schengen Movements: guest analyst workshop on secondary movements with the participation of two MS and EASO. Launch of joint assessment Frontex-EASO-Europol on secondary movements, to be released in March 2019. - Four FRAN Quarterly reports issued in full and public versions. - Annual Risk Analysis: Risk Analysis for 2018 issued in full and public versions. The ARA supports strategic decision-making by Frontex senior and executive management, the MB as well as policy-making activities related to the IBM. MS, Europol and EASO contribute to the Annual Risk Analysis process. Presentation packages at various WPs and other fora. Member States regularly updated on the developments and state of play of the FRAN and the EDF-RAN information exchanges. Knowledge on concrete reporting issues in Member States, and agreement on the way to solve them in the future. - FRAN Annual Survey was conducted in May. Presentation of the Annual FRAN report findings in the June FRAN meeting, and full report distributed in September, as well as summary to Management Board in September. <p>EDF-RAN:</p> | | | |

- Three meetings of the European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network (May, September, and December) with an average participation of 25 Member States/Schengen associated countries, and the European Commission, Europol and INTERPOL.
- Three analyst workshops with the participation of Member States to support work on the tailored EDF-RAN products: handbook on Iraqi documents, handbook on Syrian documents, handbook on Afghan documents.
- EDF-ARA 2018 drawn up as planned. Regular incorporation of analysis on document fraud in FRAN Quarterly reports and monthly analytical outputs, as relevant. Increased quality of and enhanced information collected through the FRAN and EDF-RAN network as the basis for better quality Frontex reports.

THB: The THB handbook package 2017 was completed in at the end of 2017 and disseminated in early 2018. It was decided that the updates will not be produced every year but every second year. The next update of the THB Handbook package is planned for 2019.

Situation updates: In 2018, Frontex continued on producing its monthly analysis such as Monthly Analysis (11 issues), Statistical Report (12 issues) and Analytical Brief (5 issues). The monthly products provide the EU policy making level (i.e. ministers of the interior, the EU Council working parties, the European Commission), and border and migration management agencies and national and EU level, with the analysis of the most important developments and key trends in matters related to illegal border-crossing, cross-border crime and terrorism.

Return

- Following the launch of the Return Monthly at the end of 2017, 11 issues were released in 2018. The Return Monthly summarises return developments against the background of irregular migration to Europe, grouped by regions of origin of returnees. In addition, RAU continued to support the European Centre for Returns with Briefing Notes on return issues related to specific nationalities.
- Furthermore, in 2018 Frontex released for the first time the Annual Baseline for Return in 2018 for 26 MS and SAC.
- Following the preparation for and the takeover of the IRMA by Frontex, while the importance of the operational data collection was stressed, Frontex launched the meetings of MS experts on this topic. In 2018, two meetings of the working group on return data for analysis were organised, with the average participation of 28 MS, the European Commission, EASO and Eurostat. In addition, one guest analyst workshop on Redefining the Efficiency of Return was organised with the participation of three Member States.

Cross-Border Crime, following of the update of the mandate of Frontex to cover all areas of cross-border crime, a workshop was organised to identify the relevant fields of cross-border crime and to launch the work on common definitions, with the participation of 6 MS and Europol.

Common-risk indicators, update of the common risk indicators booklet, including the visual materials. Translation, printing, and distribution of the booklet in EU languages: BG, DE, ES, FR, GR, HU, IT, PL, RO, HR. Acquisition of OSINT subscription related to the monitoring of terrorist threats. Launch of consultancy services relevant for further updates of the common risk indicators booklet.

Maritime Intelligence Community Risk Analysis Network

- The Maritime Intelligence Community – Risk Analysis Network (MIC-RAN) was established, and contact points per agency were designated to facilitate the exchange of maritime intelligence, cross-border crime data and dissemination of risk analysis products. The first meeting of the MIC-RAN took place in October with the participation of 33 MSs’ representatives, EC, EMSA and EFCA.
- MIC-RAN has provided useful and actionable analytical knowledge in support of multipurpose operational responses of Frontex and national authorities responsible for border management/surveillance in the maritime domain. In 2018, 63 reports were issued (46 Maritime Analysis Reports and 17 Brief Analytical Report) to several users and requestors, such as Member States, EUNAVFORMED and Frontex operational units (e.g. Law Enforcement Sector).

CIRAM

For 2018, a minor update of the CIRAM was expected (CIRAM 2.1). However, after initial discussions with MS, it was decided to skip this step and rather develop a process that will lead to an overall revision of the CIRAM (CIRAM 3.0) by 2021. This overall revision will take into account changes in the agency's regulation, the EC strategy for IBM and the agency's technical and operational strategic document, as well as current legislative proposals being recently adopted or in discussions (ETIAS, EBCG regulation update, including Eurosur, etc.). Several workshops were organised to receive MS feedback on the experiences with current CIRAM with the participation of four MSs, as well as a workshop related to CIRAM was conducted, with the participation of nine MSs.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|--|---|-----------|
| RAU-02 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EaP-RAN meetings and workshops; - EaP-ARA and EaP Quarterly packages; - AFIC meetings and workshops; - AFIC annual report package; - AFIC Monthly packages; - AFIC capacity building activities; - TU-RAN meetings; - TU-RAN ARA and TU-RAN Quarterly packages; - monthly regional reports for WB-RAN and EaP-RAN; - WB-RAN ARA, WB-RAN Quarterly packages; - WB-RAN meetings; - third country monitoring included in regular analytical production; - reviewed product portfolio of tailored Third Country monitoring products, in line with the methodology, and meeting the needs of various EU stakeholders; - user-friendly access to RAU TCM products for Frontex stakeholders; - participation in relevant EU cooperation platforms (incl. ILO, EMLO, EURLO network meetings); - delivery of risk-analysis training facilitating joint analytical work. | 6.92 (in addition 5 FTE AFIC Devco project) | 809,35.51 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>WB-RAN: Expert meeting (March) with the participation of 20 experts from the MSs, 12 from the Western Balkan countries and EU Institutions one from, EASO, UNCHR and two from Europol and IOM. WB Annual Analytical Review meeting with the participation of 12 experts from WB countries and 10 from Member States and end of year planning meeting with the participation of experts from the Western Balkan countries. Guest analyst workshop in February with the participation of Kosovo, Montenegro, Albania, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. Following the developments concerning migration pressure on the WB route, an extraordinary meeting of the WB-RAN was organised in July with the participation of 10 experts from Western Balkans countries, 8 from MS and EU Institutions one from EASO and Europol and two from the European Commission and a follow-up meeting in September to facilitate the transition to a new Western Balkans Daily Information Exchange System. As a result and in coordination with FSC a daily reporting mechanism was set up, also serving the purpose of early warning. WB-RAN end-of-the-year meeting in Warsaw with the participation of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Montenegro, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia.</p> <p>Information exchange system operational and enabling production of periodical reports: WB-RAN Annual Risk Analysis (full and public versions). Four WB Quarterly reports produced, though</p> | | | |

the production of public release versions was delayed due to human resource limitations. Twelve Western Balkans Monthly Statistical reports released to the WB-RAN partners. Increased knowledge on the migratory situation in the region enabling quality contributions on the region to general and specific periodical reporting, as well as monthly contribution to the Western Balkans videoconference organised by COM. Feedback to WB-RAN partners and FRAN on the developments. Increased visibility of the network among international organisations in the region.

EaP-RAN: Annual analytical review meeting (January) with the participation of five experts from MSs and eleven experts from EaP countries. Expert meeting (March) with the participation of seventeen experts from MSs, two experts from Europol, and ten representatives of five EaP countries. End-of-year meeting with the participation of eleven experts from EaP countries. The coordination with IEC and Eastern Partnership team implementing the activities of Eastern Partnership project.

Information exchange operational and enabling production of periodical reports: Eastern European Borders Annual Risk Analysis (full and public versions which was, however, produced with a delay due to human-resource limitations). Annual report was translated into Russian, with the support of guest analysts from EaP-RAN countries. Four EP Quarterly reports (full and public versions are available on the website, although with a delay due to human resource limitations). In 2018, the monthly regional reports were not delivered for EaP-RAN, due to absences/departures of staff.

AFIC Devco grant: Continuation of project activities in line with the planning: elaboration and delivery of first training modules for AFIC partners, establishment of the first Risk Analysis Cell in Niger and related concept, implementation of regional workshops support in the production and release of twelve AFIC Monthly Reports in English and French languages shared via CIRCABC as a feedback mechanism to the AFIC community, continuation of scoping and field visits to prepare and monitor activities. An EU Liaison Officers' Meeting in the framework of the Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC) organised in October in Spain with the participation of 34 MS Liaison Officers posted in Africa, six EMLOs, the European Commission and Europol.

TU-RAN: The expected results listed as TU-RAN meetings and TU-RAN annual and quarterly products were not implemented in 2018 given the lack of engagement from Turkey. TU-RAN meetings were reduced to one meeting at the end of the year.

Third-country monitoring: results of a regular third-country monitoring included in regular reports and *ad hoc* briefings were tailored to the needs of Frontex and EU-level stakeholders, also in EUROSUR (analysis layer). Continued production and consolidation of third-country monitoring portfolio: ninety-three third-country analysis reports were produced and disseminated in 2018. The continued use of social media analysis service tailored to EU borders' analytical needs, resulting in the delivery of a social media landscape report and monthly monitoring of selected areas based on its findings.

Access to sources: a review of the usage of sources for third-country monitoring and analysis: continuation of existing subscriptions, identification and contracting new tailored monitoring services, identification and preparation for further diversification of sources.

Contribution to the vulnerability assessment processes and products: following the consolidation of the common vulnerability assessment methodology and underlying processes, Risk Analysis Unit has been providing assessment on the emerging threats as well as input to the simulation exercises. The contribution to emerging threat assessment was provided in the form of monthly product: External Threat Assessment monthly (12 issues in 2018).

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|--|-------|-----------|
| RAU-03 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk Analysis input for JO planning, including ABT planning and implementation (AOD); - Risk Analysis inputs to JO implementation and evaluation; - Risk Analysis Input to EBGCT processes; - Regular staffing of intelligence component in EUTF Greece and Italy; - 2 AB-RAN meetings; - Pulsar data collection implemented. | 16.38 | 51,912.77 |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| | - Operational risk analysis input provided with regard to the development of methodology and assessment for the purposes of coastguard function. | | |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Support to JOs:</p> <p>All Frontex's joint operations and rapid exercises were supported in 2018. The operational analysts supported the joint operations in the preparatory phase, during the implementation and in the evaluation of each joint operation and rapid intervention. In particular, during the preparatory phase they provided the analytical assessments that served as a foundation for the planning and later for the drafting of the operational plan in relation to the identification of the operational concept, the definition of the operational area, the duration and period of the JO, and providing knowledge basis for the deployment of assets and experts. In addition, they provided their input in the definition of the resources, structure and processes that relate to intelligence, and supported the negotiation with the Member States.</p> <p>During the implementation of the joint operations and the rapid intervention the operational analysts provided regular analytical reports, with three distinct set of addressees, the bi-weekly analytical reports for the project team and the coordination structure of the operation such as the ICC, the bi-weekly analytical briefing for Frontex management and internal stakeholders and the bi-weekly analytical updates for the experts seconded in the operational areas. In addition, the weekly analytical overview as a dedicated product to be shared with other actors in the operational area was shared for selected operations; Triton/Themis, Poseidon, Indalo, FOA WB and FOA SE. The portfolio of operational analysis reports to provide prompt advice on new trends has been developed (analytical warning for operations, operational analysis on routes, modus operandi, nationalities, etc.) and the standardisation process has been launched (2018: five analytical warnings for operations, 22 reports on operational analysis on routes, modus operandi, nationalities, etc.). In addition, regular tailored periodical analytical reporting from key operational areas was provided to IPCR (37 inputs in 2018) and ISAA. JORA templates were elaborated and updated for the purpose of operational reporting.</p> <p>Operational analysis inputs also supported the planning and implementation of JAD (more details included under RAU-06).</p> <p>Responses based on analytical findings were provided to numerous stakeholders upon request. Advice and update on the impact of geopolitical developments in key transit countries, on the operational response was provided as needed/requested. Situation awareness at the external borders was provided as input to regular and ad hoc operational analysis, and for information of Frontex Management in Weekly Operational Briefings.</p> <p>Contribution to vulnerability assessment: operational analysis input was provided to vulnerability assessment processes and products requiring additional workload on the side of operational analysts.</p> <p>ABN support, the assessment for operational deployment and specific fact sheets per route were prepared in July and August to facilitate the preparation of ABN.</p> <p>EBGT: As in the past years, RAU managed the selection process and deployment planning for STM deployed within joint operations, profile: debriefing experts.</p> <p>Operational analysis input for the coastguard function: Following the establishment of the maritime analysis taskforce, two operational analysts were assigned full time and one half time to establish the concept and develop the project, thereby providing relevant input.</p> <p>EURTF support: RAU staff was deployed to EURTF Catania on regular basis in Q1 2018. Since then, there were no possibilities for continued staff deployment due to human resource limitations and the fact that staff was reassigned to other priorities such as the operational analysis input for MIC-RAN as well as the preparation of the CIC deployment.</p> <p>Crime Information Cell: Frontex staff was deployed to the Crime Information Cell, on a continuous basis, since 5 July throughout 2018 and delivered over 65 assessments to EUNAVFOR Med requested by the latter.</p> | | | |

These assessments provided further knowledge in relation to the vessels of interest and served as the law enforcement input for the EUNAVFOR Med decisions in relation to the boarding of three suspicious vessels.

From the beginning of the Crime Information Cell pilot project until the end of December of 2018 a total of 591 hailing queries, 57 friendly approaches and three boarding's were performed by the assets of UNAVFORMED under the umbrella of the Crime Information Cell.

In December 2018, the evaluation of the Crime Information Cell pilot project took place, with the participation of Frontex, Europol and EUNAVFOR Med. Due to the good level of cooperation between the three agencies, it was initially decided to extend the Crime Information Cell for a period of three months until the end of March of 2019, pending further decision from the CSDP. Cooperation between Frontex, Europol and EUNAVFOR Med continues in relation to sharing of intelligence related to vessels suspected of illegal activities from and towards Libya.

Information Clearing House: Since 1 October 2018, Frontex has started the deployment of one Frontex analyst within the Information Clearing House at Europol. The main tasks of the deployed analyst are to facilitate the information exchange between Frontex and Europol, and facilitate the access of Europol to Eurosur Fusion Services developed by Frontex. The deployment to the Information Clearing House has significantly increased the information exchange between the two agencies. More specifically, since the beginning of the deployment, Frontex has responded to 24 requests of information, analysis or GIS products. Europol has provided two Intelligence Notifications to Frontex. Additionally, Frontex and Europol drafted one joint analysis on secondary movements from regional airports and other joint reports are being prepared.

According to the opinion of the EDPS, Frontex has no legal mandate to receive operational personal data from Europol. This legal limitation is an obstacle to the possibility for Frontex to enrich its risk analysis and mapping cross-border crime threats at the EU external borders. Furthermore, it limits the possibilities of Frontex to support the ICH at its full capacity, because Frontex cannot receive requests for information that refer to specific suspects. Nevertheless, the deployment to the Information Clearing House enhanced the mutual understanding of the two agencies about each other's needs and possibility to brainstorm and explore new areas of cooperation making the cooperation between the two agencies even more fruitful.

AB-RAN: Due to the limited geographical reach and time limited operations at air borders, RAU maintained situational awareness across the greater part of the external air borders with weekly reporting from over a hundred key EU and Schengen airports together with seven airports in six third countries using the Pulsar Weekly statistical data collection. The AB-RAN project was completed to achieving the transfer of Pulsar data into a web based format in JORA permitting MS/SAC mutual access to the totality of MS data along with the ability to carry out risk analysis using SAS tools. Fourteen monitoring reports based on the PULSAR data were prepared by RAU and shared with MS and SAC. The reporting process was further strengthened by the use of analysts from 26 MS/SAC attending the two meetings of the Air Borders Risk Analysis Network (AB-RAN) carried out in May and November, which allowed for the identification and sharing of emerging trends across the sector.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|--|----|------------|
| RAU-04 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - support and management of debriefing activities in operational areas; - updated debriefing reference material per route; - acquisition of personal data from operational areas; - intelligence officer workshops; - risk analyses and transmissions of personal data to Europol. Pilot implementation of the extended scope of personal data processing on suspects, including transfer to MS & other EU law enforcement agencies. | 11 | 315,080.13 |

Delivered results

Debriefing activities: during 2018, in the framework of the analytical input to joint operations approx. 4,112 debriefing interview reports were submitted to Frontex; 3,596 in sea operations and 516 in land operations. Besides that 725 intelligence officers' reports and 1,447 landing reports were made and sent to Frontex's Risk Analysis Unit to be processed. Three RAU Debriefing Advisors (SNEs) were providing regional support to the Human Intelligence Network (HUMINT). In order to enhance regional coordination, one of them was deployed in Greece one in Italy and another one was tasked to support debriefing activities in Spain, Bulgaria and Italy and Greece based on intelligence needs. In total, they were deployed during 47 missions to many

operational areas (Indalo, Themis, Minerva, Poseidon, as well as Flexible Activities) where they delivered Debriefing Activity Workshops during rotations for MS debriefing experts and national officers coming from different MSs. Regular contacts with debriefers and instructions were provided through briefing meetings with operational analysts and weekly video conferences. In addition, an External Debriefing Expert was contracted by RAU and had 8 missions to the operational area of four joint operations and at the Frontex's Headquarters delivering two two-day workshops, each attended by approximately 25 participants from several MS experts (screening and debriefing experts, fingerprint officers, document experts, FSO, team leaders) cultural mediators and other Frontex staff. **Debriefing material updates**, three debriefing material packages were updated in 2018.

Intelligence officer workshops: One HUMINT network meeting organised by RAU took place at Frontex's HQ comprising of intelligence officers and team leaders of joint debriefing teams involved in the hotspots in joint operations, focusing on the developments in the field of migrant debriefing and on the collection of operational information including personal data. Furthermore, two awareness sessions for team leaders in MS hosting joint debriefing teams were organised to present the latest migration trends, as well as to streamline the collection of operational information and exchange best practices.

Support to TRU debriefing expert training, RAU supported four intelligence trainings courses organised by Frontex Training Unit by sending RAU analysts for the planning of training activities, the evaluation of the trainees and providing presentations on the latest issues related to debriefing activities in joint operations.

Personal data processing: In relation to the processing of personal data for risk analysis and transmission to Europol, in 2018, Frontex continued to collect operational personal data from debriefing interviews conducted in the framework of Frontex operational activities. All of the obtained personal data were transmitted to Europol: in particular 1,129 intelligence packages containing personal data and contextual information regarding 2,466 suspects, 195 addresses, and 2,004 telephone numbers. These data were cross-checked at Europol and generated 102 hits. In relation to the transfer of personal data to Member States, a working group for consultations with MS was launched. Preparation of draft operational concept: Frontex will continue developing its legal, technical, and operational capabilities to transmit personal data to Member States in the framework of the PeDRA. An extension project is planned to be launched during Q1 of 2019.

In relation to the transmission of personal data to Eurojust, the consultations between Frontex and Eurojust regarding the transmission of personal data continued throughout 2018, involving several meetings, including a presentation to the Eurojust College regarding the benefits associated with the planned information exchange. In November 2018, the Eurojust College decided to formally initiate negotiations with Frontex to develop the legal, technical, and operational capabilities that are necessary for the information exchange between the two agencies. This aspect will be further discussed and planned during Q1 and Q2 of 2019.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|---|----|----|
| RAU-05 | Preparing the documents relevant for the prior authorisation of EDPS for the personal data processing for migration management. | 0 | 0 |

Delivered results

This activity has not been implemented in 2018 due to the current legal framework of EASO – the main recipient of these data – which does not allow to process personal data. The implementation of this objective depends thus largely on the adoption of the new EASO regulation.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|--|------|-----------|
| RAU-06 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk Analyses for Schengen Evaluation Mechanism; - observer participation in Schengen evaluation missions; - Risk analysis support to art 8. 2 (b) of the SBC; - Risk Analysis supporting visa liberalisation processes; - Risk Analysis inputs to relevant EU policies; | 3.50 | 70,010.84 |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk Analysis for Presidency Operation if required; - regular analytical support to EU level situation awareness; - relevant contributions to the planning and implementation of Frontex-led and participated priorities within EU Policy Cycle/ EMPACT. | | |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Analytical input provided by Frontex in the implementation of relevant regulations and policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Schengen Evaluation Mechanism. Report for the Annual Programme 2018 delivered to the European Commission and shared with MS as required; - Schengen Evaluation Mechanism. Risk Analysis for Unannounced On-site Visits in 2018 delivered to the European Commission as required; - involvement of Member States in the guest analyst workshop to analyse the data needed for the Schengen Evaluation Mechanism reports; - Frontex observer participation in Schengen Evaluation Mechanism announced visits; - support to the implementation of Art 8 of the Amended Schengen Border Code; - regular monthly input to EASO for elaboration the Joint Post Visa Liberalisation Monitoring Mechanism Report (Western Balkans); - provision of input to visa dialogues led by the European Commission as required; - provision of contribution to the European Commission's Second Report under the Visa Suspension Mechanism, stemming from the Regulation 371/2017. <p>EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT: Following the structural changes at Frontex, as of 2018 the coordination of the input to the EU Policy Cycle is no longer financed by RAU and has moved to the Coastguard and Law Enforcement Unit. RAU provided contributions to the OAP Facilitated Illegal Migration, THB, Firearms, and Excise Fraud, and provided analytical assessments for the purpose of JAD Danube and JAD Olympus.</p> | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|---|------|------------|
| RAU-07 | RAU contribution to required briefing notes, situation analysis and updates, presentations and policy documents, press information. | 0 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>This activity has not been implemented in 2018 due to the current legal framework of EASO, (main recipient of these data) which does not allow them to process personal data. The implementation of this objective depends thus largely on the adoption of the new EASO regulation.</p> | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| RAU-08 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - data analysis and GIS analysis inputs; - increased automation of data analysis; - monthly data processing for cross-border crime for the regional RANs implemented; - availability of identified OSINT and OSINF sources directly to analysts; - training delivered. - availability of technical solutions delivering five capabilities (modules) critical for the delivery of vulnerability assessments (data collection, data model, process monitoring, VA analytical tools and output management). | 7.09 | 608,104.34 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Data analysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - implementation of an improved data template and expansion of the data collection (age, gender and unaccompanied minors); - changes in the data model and dataset structure and update of all automated data reports; - continued automated reporting packages for specific areas of interest; - continued tailored data analytics for end-users; - outlier detection and discrepancy analysis for data quality and data validation reports; - update of the Vulnerability Assessment objective indicators and third-country monitoring threat levels data reports; - access to external open source data and integration with the in-house available datasets; - data workshops and training provided for the data providers. | | | |

GIS Analysis

- Continuous update and maintenance of geospatial data; Risk Analysis GIS Portal continuous maintenance and upgrades: enhancement access to geospatial analytical services; centralised area for analytical mapping products; improved self-service capabilities; continuous support to vulnerability assessment: cartography and geospatial analysis and tailored web map applications; continuous support to risk analysis: cartography and geospatial analysis and tailored web map applications; support on request to operations division units and sectors: cartography and geospatial analysis; development and maintenance of the new dynamic migration map on Frontex's web page: support to the press; support to MSs and the EU agencies or bodies in terms of geospatial analysis and cartographic products; sharing automation with Eurosur system of analytical products (key developments and earth observation products).

Implementation of Copernicus DA:

- management of requests for Imagery Intelligence (IMINT) services in support of MSs on border surveillance and cross-border crime (CBC): 116 task requests processed resulting in 304 earth observation products.
- coordination and delivery of four IMINT for border surveillance trainings to 46 MSs and 17 Frontex staff, increase the awareness of the imagery intelligence services' availability and use.
- tailoring IMINT workshop for the Polish border guard service;
- coordination and delivery of the Analysis Layer User Group meeting to update stakeholders on the Analysis Layer services and EUROSUR Analysis Tools (AnTools).
- update and maintenance of documentation for the provision of services under Copernicus DA, reporting on services implementation.

Vulnerability assessment data project management:

- stand-alone data collection tool deployed in all 29 MS/SACs to support the 2018 Baseline Assessment (BA) (2nd cycle).
- data model deployed and information loaded in the VA Database supporting data collected on the BA 2nd Cycle and integrated with the 1st Cycle of the BA procedure.
- database deployed and operation in Frontex EU-R environment containing all data from Data for its 1st and 2nd cycle.
- definition and implementation of the quality checks to process the data from the Stand-alone DCT to the VA Data Base and further upload to the analytical layer and artefacts for VAU analysts to perform their assessments.
- development and implementation of the ETL to extract, transform and load from the stand-alone DCT to the VA Database.
- definition, development and implementation of artefact to perform SE exercises, including the loading of data in the VA Database.
- development of the prototype to support the BA procedure in the stage of preparing the interim baseline assessment under SharePoint/myFx infrastructure.

OSINT and OSINF acquisition:

The acquisition of OSINT and OSINF sources to analysis has been implemented and is reported under the respective objectives to which it contributes: RAU-1, RAU-2, and RAU 3

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|---|----|----|
| RAU-09 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analytical products and services elaborated and available in the analysis layer, including land earth observation services delivered within the framework of Copernicus DA. - Regular updates of impact levels for relevant sea and land border sections as per agreed procedure. - RAU Business User inputs provided for the development of Analysis Tools | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Analysis layer population: In 2018, RAU uploaded 57 reports in the analysis layer, including key developments (42), briefing notes (14), and one supporting analytical report.</p> <p>Due to an ongoing development of an automated process for sharing Earth Observation Reports with all nodes, the sharing was suspended for 2018.</p> <p>As result of the extensive cooperation with EU SatCen for the provision of imagery analysis services (pre-frontier monitoring, coastal monitoring, reference mapping and evolution) within the framework of the Copernicus Delegation Agreement, Member States had the possibility to request Earth Observation services and access to 708 satellite images shared in the CPIP/ESP Analysis Layer.</p> <p>Impact levels:</p> <p>Impact levels for Eurosur border sections were monthly reassessed and 5 updates were performed throughout 2018.</p> <p>Analysis tools:</p> <p>Analysis Tools for the Analysis Layer were developed by ICT, with RAU providing business-user input. Three modules were developed: business intelligence, GIS and the analytical reports management one. The tools were tested with a positive result, while final deployment and availability to MS is still pending.</p> <p>Analysis layer user group:</p> <p>One meeting of the ALUG with the participation of 22 MSs (69% MS represented). The meeting focused on the development of analysis tools as well as the usage of the earth observation services and was financed under Copernicus DA.</p> | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR | FR |
|--|--|----|------------|
| RAU-10 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - four vulnerability assessment network meetings; - baseline vulnerability assessment reports for all MSs. Simulation exercises based on risk analysis leading to the assessment reports, monthly scanning of risk analysis indicators leading to emerging threat assessment reports; - assessment of MSs' contribution to the rapid intervention pool; - proposals for recommendations on necessary measures and monitoring of their implementation. Other ongoing projects such as work on quantification of the CVAM objective criteria. | 12 | 461,500.00 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>The Member States were engaged through the Vulnerability Assessment Network (VAN) in developing VA activities throughout the year. Four network meetings were organised (two in countries holding the EU Council Presidency at the time), complemented by four workshops. Additionally, awareness sessions and on-site support for vulnerability assessment data collection were organised individually in nine Member States. In June 2018, VAU also organised a high-level roundtable on vulnerability assessment, a conference raising awareness among senior stakeholders, emphasising the role that vulnerability assessment plays as a quality-control mechanism for the Schengen area.</p> <p>Baseline assessments addressing a wide range of border-control capacities were completed for all 29 Member States concerned. Furthermore, simulation exercises were launched for a selected number of Member States in order to assess especially their readiness to face upcoming challenges and threats.</p> <p>Monthly scanning of the situation at the external borders continued, leading to a launch of emerging threat assessments – aimed at targeting immediate consequences at the borders and remedying threats before they escalate.</p> <p>In order to mitigate the vulnerabilities identified the Executive Director may issue recommendations of necessary measures to be taken by the Member State concerned. Importantly, in cooperation with many internal units from different divisions, in 2018 the Agency also successfully piloted a proactive approach, offering support to the Member States in implementing recommendations issued to eliminate the vulnerabilities identified during the assessment phase.</p> <p>The assessment of the capacity to contribute to the pool for rapid intervention was elaborated and presented to the MS/SAC in VAN and PRN meetings. The assessment itself will be piloted for the first time in 2019.</p> <p>With the engagement of the MS/SAC representatives throughout the year, an update of the Common Vulnerability Assessment Methodology (CVAM) was proposed by the ED to the Management Board and adopted in November.</p> <p>Two bi-annual reports on vulnerability assessment results were issued to the European Parliament, the Council of the EU and the European Commission.</p> <p>Steps were taken to advance other VA projects, such as development of new assessment tools and update of the objective indicators.</p> | | | |

4.6. Management of pooled resources

- **PRU-1 Resource management:**

Provision of technical assistance and management of resources aimed at securing that appropriate human and technical resources are made available for the deployment to support operational activities. Implementation and executing the Seconded Team Member (STM) mechanism according Art. 20 (11) Regulation (EU) 2016/1624, MB Decision 25/2012, ED Decision 2013/29 *et alia*.

- **PRU-2 Infrastructure development and equipment maintenance:**

Maintaining the quality of the resources made available for deployment to ensure they are appropriate, sufficient, cost-effective and correctly allocated to meet operational needs and legal obligations as well as provision of appropriate infrastructure, including tools and procedures which contribute to enhancing the quality of resource management processes. Application, exchange and promotion of knowledge and best practices exchanged in the framework of the Pooled Resources Network to further enhance the management of resources.

- **PRU-3 Acquisition of technical equipment and services:**

Acquisition of technical equipment and/or services to ensure that sufficient, efficient and cost-effective technical resources and logistical solutions are available to Frontex to cover all identified operational needs.

- **PRU-4 Establishment of rapid reaction capacity:**

Provision of technical assistance and management of resources aimed at securing that appropriate human and technical resources are made available for rapid border interventions as well as monitoring and enhancing Frontex's and MSs' /SAC's preparedness for rapid deployments via appropriate exercises.

- **PRU-5 Assessment of violations of code of conduct:**

Head of the Pooled Resources Unit possesses the role of the Coordinator in cases of violations of Frontex's code of conduct for PRU-handled HR-resources (mainly TMs, STMs) according to ED Decision 2014/08. In parallel, he/she possesses the role of the SIR-coordinator in cases of SIR-reporting for category 3 (suspected violation of code of conduct) related to PRU-handled HR-resources according to ED-Decision 2014/55.

- **PRU-6 Health and safety for PRU-handled HR-resources in operations:**

Conducting targeted projects in relation to enhancing MSs' /SACs' and Frontex's capacities related to the duty of care as – PRU working group on safety & health requested by JOU and Frontex's Mental Health Strategy.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|--|----|------------------|
| PRU-01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - established Frontex's capacity to meet the operational needs (establishment and maintenance of relevant HR and TE pools and provision of resources identified for a given deployment); - running annual and targeted extraordinary STM calls; - deployment management by STM deployment overview in close liaison with operational entities. | 5 | 159,000.00 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Provision of operational resources through the implementation of ABN 2018 with MS/SAC supplemented by deployment of STMs and Frontex's own technical equipment, followed up by open and extraordinary calls to cover gaps. Launch of the STM and ABN process in order to mobilise resources for the activities planned for 2019. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| PRU-02 | Appropriate tools and procedures for resource management and enhanced quality of the resources and processes. | 2 | 1,682,229.30 (*) |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - utilisation and maintenance of Opera 2.0 in order to manage the pools; - use of the interim solution ABNet in order to facilitate the ABN process; - successful tender procedure and subsequent contract signed for the Opera Evolution project aimed delivering a comprehensive solution for the establishment, management and deployment of the pools; - stakeholder management through successfully conducted Pooled Resources Network meetings with MS/SAC, Commission and invited institutions. | | | |
| (*) Includes <i>Opera 2.0, Opera Evolution, PRN, meetings and logistics</i> | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| PRU-03 | Enhanced Frontex's technical capacity to meet the operational needs by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -acquisition of TE or services for border control tasks; -procurement of services for return activities; -acquisition of services and equipment to provide logistical support for operational areas and hot spots; -procurement of other items/small equipment to support Frontex's activities. | 10 | 8,191,981.31 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - contracts signed for the acquisition of technical equipment and services, including light equipment, vehicles and supporting services; - successful implementation of chartering aircraft for return activities and further support in the implementation of the readmissions by sea between Greece and Turkey; - frontex's Aerial Surveillance Services delivered according to plan; - contracts signed to provide the mobile office capacity and other (small) equipment to operational locations; - Frontex's visual identity items distributed according to the required needs; - outline logistics model including recommended acquisition or leasing models for different types of equipment completed; - model agreement and logistical processes drafted. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |

| | | | |
|--|--|-----------|------------|
| PRU-04 | Established rapid reaction capacity (rapid reaction pool and rapid reaction equipment pool) | 2 | 336,482.00 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Successful establishment of the rapid reaction pools in accordance with the EBCG Regulation significantly improved coverage of the needs in the rapid reaction equipment pool. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| PRU-05 | Assessing related cases Proposal of advised further actions to Frontex senior management | 1 | 0 |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| As per the new ED Decision on Code of Conduct and SIR, this task is no longer under the responsibility of the Pooled Resources Unit. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| PRU-06 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - re-active communication with Ms/SACs; - regular information exchange in the course of PRN network; - supporting internal stakeholders. | 1 | 90,081.47 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - fruitful workplace inspections at the hotspots in Greece and Italy; - launch of a mapping exercise of vaccination policies and practices in Member States for deployed personnel engaged in Frontex's coordinated activities; - provision by Frontex the personal protection equipment and patrol emergency bleeding kits; - publication of Frontex's Safety and Health Guidelines; - developing partnerships with EC DG Sante, CHAFAE, EASO and Europol; - English translation and publication of the 'Regional Migrant Healthcare Contingency Plan' (2018) for Sicily (Piano di Contingenza Sanitario Regionale Migranti (2017)); - monitoring and recording of reported Incidents related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o accidents involving personnel both on and off duty; o hospitalisation of personnel; o infections and disease outbreaks in operational areas. | | | |

4.7. Training

- **TRU-1 Career path education:** Career path education has at its core an objective to design and deliver high-level specific training products for national border and coast guards, ensuring harmonised standards and operational competencies. It addresses border and coast guard training needs not only at basic and mid-level but also covers the existing gap in higher education for mid and high-level officers. In 2018 priority was given to the implementation of the CCC basic, finalisation of the CCC mid-level as well as the launching of an extended interoperability assessment programme.
- **TRU-2 Pre-deployment training:** The pre-deployment training activities aim at enhancing skills and competences of the EBCGT and return pools members and other relevant staff required for carrying out their duties effectively, corresponding to the decisions of the Management Board No. 38/2016 and 41/2016. Priority will be given to training of new profiles, training for coast guard functions in connection to border control, regional pre-deployment support and the further development of training for return pools members (forced-return monitors, forced-return escorts and return specialists).
- **TRU-3 Thematic training:** Development, delivery and implementation of certified training products (tools and courses) for border and coast guard officers and other relevant staff from the Member States, Schengen associated countries, working-agreement countries and other third countries, in line with the SQF for border guarding. Focus will be set on aligning the products to the SQF, ensuring certification of competences gained during Frontex's training, maritime activities and enhanced scope of capacity building activities in third countries, i.e. in the Southern Neighbourhood.
- **TRU-4 Training networks:** To promote excellence in border guard education and training by developing and maintaining effective cooperative networks (JHA, NTC, PA and TC). The PA network approach will include the establishment of an exchange programme and grant schemes for the common training development/delivery, addressed to institutions providing education to border and coast guards and which have sufficient financial and operational capacity to implement the proposed projects. Grants will be awarded with due regard to the quality of the proposed projects.
- **TRU-5 Quality standards:** To drive and ensure the implementation of professional standards, good practice and advanced technologies in training and education for all border and coast guard training provided by Frontex. To establish and maintain a quality assurance mechanism for development, delivery, evaluation and improvement of training, leading to international recognition and validation of border and coast guard training at European level. Training needs are systematically identified, in a structured way, for both Frontex joint operations as well as for other activities. The implementation of the ICT platform and the utilisation of innovative technological solutions for training delivery.
- **TRU-6 Ad-hoc training and agility:** Training solutions to support urgent operational needs on ad hoc basis and logistics. Improved agility to implement the new Regulation.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
|--|---|----|-----------|
| TRU-01 | Aligned and certified curricula, implemented by MS/SAC in line with Frontex's educational quality assurance model; interoperability assessment programme concept developed. | 6 | 1,182,736 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CCC basic implemented in the MSs, - CCC mid-level finalised; - Extended Interoperability Assessment Programme developed. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
| TRU-02 | New quality training products, trained officers and other relevant staff. | 12 | 2,581,455 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 18 courses delivered in 92 iterations, totalling 1,770 people trained. - 3 new manuals published. - 6 new courses developed. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
| TRU-03 | Certified training products. | 9 | 2,509,000 |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 15 courses delivered in 35 iterations, totalling 1,142 people trained. - 7 new manuals published. - 6 new courses developed. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
|---|--|----|-----------|
| TRU-04 | Effective and productive cooperation and sharing of information between Frontex and its stakeholders. Increased capacities in third countries. Grants awarded. | 5 | 663,551 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhanced cooperation with stakeholders, enlarged PA network, including third countries; - a study tour to enhance cooperation between EU and Western Balkan Border and Coast Guard training institutions has been carried out; - five joint projects of European border and coast guards training institutions financed for development of products and tools for training related to the Integrated Border Management. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| TRU-05 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality assurance and certification programme developed. Training the trainers and course design, courses delivered, trainers and curriculum designers trained. - Quality assurance of business processes through automated monitoring and SPC (statistical process control) measures, KPIs and metrics established for quality assurance and business process improvement. Training Needs Assessment Report published. - Optimised eLearning solutions based on projections and modelling of needs. Implementation of VR/AR technologies as regular eLearning components. | 8 | 1,414,531 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - trainers' certification programme developed and delivered; 31 subject matter experts certified. - course Design using the SQF for BG delivered and 24 curriculum designers trained. - Frontex's Training Quality Assurance System developed and implemented as a pilot, resulting in increased credibility, accountability, transparency and international recognition of Frontex's training courses. - streamlined and standardised educational quality processes. - seven vocational courses for border and coast guards internationally validated. - seven courses held, totalling 170 benefitting learners. - online English course for border and coast guards produced and launched (1,050 enrolled in the August-December period). | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
| TRU-06 | Training products, training capacities increased, trained officers. | 1 | 314,900 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| (*) FR committed as per 31/12/2018, including costs of events planned for Q1 2019 and contracts for services running until September 2019 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Educational board game 'The border quest' produced. - Annual Training Conference organised and held. - Logistics and catering provided for training activities hosted in Warsaw. | | | |

4.8. Research and Innovation

- **RIU-1 Harmonisation and standardisation of the EU Member States' border control capacities:**

The activities in the area of Harmonisation and Standardisation aim at driving the process of harmonisation and development of best practices and standards in border control, both operational and technical, in line with the existing and future EU measures in order to increase security and enhance travel facilitation at the borders.

- **RIU-2 Development and technical assistance:**

The activities under the Development and Technical Assistance Project aim at maintaining, strengthening and further developing border management capacities and capabilities by providing technical assistance to Frontex's stakeholders (EC, EU Member States, EU Agencies, third countries), through the delivery of innovative solutions, including by implementing pilots and proof of concepts, with a view to facilitating the implementation and effective application of EU border management policies and initiatives.

- **RIU-3 Technology assessment and acquisition:**

The technology assessment and acquisition area integrate activities aimed at performing the operational assessments of the effectiveness of the border control systems and technologies. This includes tests and demonstrations of systems and technologies that have already achieved a high level of technology readiness and the implementation of technical feasibility studies in areas relevant for border control. The results collected can be further translated in tender specifications to support the acquisition of technical equipment by Frontex and/or the Member States.

- **RIU-4 Border security research:**

The activities pertaining to the border security research area aim to strengthen the monitoring and contribution of Frontex to the European Border Security Research and Innovation, and to coordinate and enhance the activity and involvement of the border guard community in this field.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
|--|---|----|---------|
| RIU-01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - best practices and technical guidelines on different aspects pertaining to border control developed; - needs regarding border management capacities and capabilities identified. | 4 | 336,241 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Development of capability tools and practices in the field of Automated Border Control (ABC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • revision of the two trainers manuals on ABC systems – ‘Vulnerability Assessment and Testing for ABC System’ and ‘ABC Systems Training for First Line Officers’ – was concluded; The revised trainers’ manuals are currently being used in support of the to the development of a Training on Vulnerability Assessment on ABC Systems (to be delivered in 2019); • ABC survey overview and report: the survey was conducted among MSs and the report was delivered in Q4 2018; • workshop on risk management and mitigation of ABC and biometric systems was organised in January 2018. Fifty-two experts from twenty-two MSs participated at the event; • risk management and mitigation framework for ABC and biometrics systems developed. Report was distributed to MS and internal business units; • technical expert meeting with experts from seven MS and selected Frontex business units was organised to share the best practices and exchange of operational performance data of ABC systems implemented in the EU. The meeting took place in February 2018. • training on vulnerability assessment and testing of ABC systems for Schengen evaluators. External subject matter and SQF expertise contracted for the development and execution of training in 2019. • draft report on common procurement guidelines for ABC systems finalised. Revision and publication planned in 2019. • development of capability tools and best practices for MSs to support harmonisation of the EU border control capacities: the activity concerning the development of a methodology for testing and assessing the performance of document inspection systems was successfully concluded on 21 December 2018. Publication of the report (Limited) is planned for Q1 2019. • contribution to the European and international standardisation and harmonisation activities in the area of border security; • participation and contribution to ICAO TRIP Symposium, participation and contribution to the Article 6 (EC) delivered contribution to international conferences focusing on biometric technology, associated vulnerabilities, technical standards, document fraud and other topics which includes the Face Performance Conference organised by National Institute of Science and Technology, Cyber Security Conference, Research Project Conference, BIOSIG, and CEN meeting; • development of minimum technical requirements for technical equipment for maritime equipment; the activity concerning the development of a technical report on the minimum technical and operational requirements for maritime equipment is being finalised and is expected towards the end of March 2019. Publication of the report (Limited) is planned for Q2 2019. • support development and operational implementation of the EES and ETIAS in Member States; and eu-LISA and European Commission in timely implementation of the EES project; • Frontex organised a workshop, ‘Getting It Right: Harmonised implementation of the Entry/Exit System (EES) at the external borders’; • During Austrian Presidency, together with eu-LISA Frontex co-organised a conference on ‘EU Borders – Getting Smarter through Technology’. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
|--|--|----|--------|
| RIU-02 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Innovative solutions and development-oriented technical assistance delivered to Frontex's stakeholders contributing to the evolution of border management capacities and capabilities; - Evaluation reports of the pilot projects implemented on matters covered by the European Border and Coast Guard Regulation. | 4 | 73,221 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>Technical assistance to Member States and EU institutions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the last two meetings of the Advance Information Working Group, information package was presented to the Informal Working Group on PNR and to the European Commission. The activity benefited from the good cooperation with RAU and Europol. • Technical expertise on the Feasibility Study for a Centralised Mechanism and interactive API was provided on a regular basis to the European Commission. RIU reviewed the terms of reference, contractor's contract, and the different versions of the five deliverables (Feasibility Study Report; Business Case; Report on Data Protection Legal Aspects and Privacy Impact Assessment; Resources requirements). The European Commission expects Frontex to continue providing technical expertise in this regard. • Technical expertise was provided to the internal ETIAS working group. • Technical support was provided to requesting Member States as regards their border management operations thanks to Frontex's operational research tool. The tool was given to one Member State who received training on its use. The simulation tool was purchased for RIU-2 staff who had been trained on it. • Technical expertise was provided to the EU-funded research projects through the evaluation of the projects' deliverables. Awareness was raised about Frontex activities as regards industry (BODEGA). • Technical expertise was provided to different business units. <p>Technical assistance to third countries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IPA II: Implementation of the Action Plans and selected priority areas started taking place in 2018. Also, several working visits in selected beneficiary countries have been held in order to monitor the implementation of agreed actions. Later in 2018, the main emphasis was put on assessment in the field of IT technologies and solutions dedicated to the management of mixed migration flows in order to put forward concrete proposals for upgrading the existing national systems and establishing national integrated border management information systems connecting all relevant authorities in respective countries. It has been agreed that this assessment will be provided through the delivery of a feasibility study. The feasibility study has been successfully launched in December 2018. • Bosnia and Herzegovina Emergency Measures Action Plan to Combat Illegal Migration: Frontex provided support to strengthen the material and technical equipment of the BiH Service for Foreigners' Affairs, by purchasing automatic readers of biometric data. • A Conference on Advance Information in the EU for Western Balkan countries was organised. The objective was to provide these countries with an overview of the collection and processing of advance information in the EU law enforcement context. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR(*) |
|---|--|----|-----------|
| RIU-03 | Enhanced operational border control capacities within EU through the use of state-of-the-art technologies. | 4 | 3,049,100 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Activities implemented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Trial of one Remotely-Piloted Aircraft System for long endurance Maritime Aerial Surveillance was conducted by Frontex RIU in the Eastern Mediterranean Sea, with the crucial support of the hosting Member State: Greece. All scheduled flights were carried out yielding the following important results: RPAS can perform efficiently Coast Guard Function missions. - A pilot activity in support of RAU was initiated to assess already existing maritime analysis tools – maritime ‘big data’, and the capacity to exploit this data to produce information of interest for border/coast guard and law enforcement authorities. - A pilot activity under Copernicus was conducted to assess the feasibility of a potential new Copernicus service aiming to detect fast-go vessels wakes in specific areas of the Mediterranean Sea. This activity was carried out in close cooperation with FSC and RAU. - Upon request of Member States, a workshop with the industry and Member States on Border Control Devices and Systems for Entry/Exit was organised. It related to registration equipment and systems which could be deployed at border crossing points to comply with the EES regulation. - The aim of the ‘biometrics-on-the-move technology’ (BOM) pilot project is to test the feasibility and potential of ‘biometrics-on-the-move technology’ for the verification of the identity of travellers’ technology for border checks. The procurement procedure was launched in December 2018. - support provided upon request – 2018 ISF Specific Actions for Frontex equipment (maritime domain) – participation in the development of the minimal requirements for OPV, CPV and CPB; - participation in the technical subcommittee on sharing of information and surveillance services in line with the Tripartite Working Arrangement (TWA) – members appointed by ED – tools by which the three Agencies can manage the cooperation at a technical level and implement the annual strategic plan. - implementation (Frontex-EFCA Stakeholder Group Meeting on the European cooperation on Coastguard Functions with the focus on the Mediterranean Sea) - to update the end users of both communities on the current state of play as regards maritime surveillance-related projects regarding coast guard functions and implementation of the TWA. - first working visit in Albania to support Maritime Surveillance capacity enhancement; - based on the request received from the Albanian Department for Border and Migration, the Maritime Surveillance Team from RIU provided assistance as regards the technical specifications for maritime surveillance radar. <p>Activities delayed, trial of a second Remotely-Piloted Aircraft System for long endurance Maritime Aerial Surveillance was conducted by Frontex RIU in the Central Mediterranean Sea, with the crucial support of the hosting Member State: Italy. Flights were delayed and the contract extended into 2019.</p> | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|-----------|
| RIU-04 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a) Finalised preparations for implementing art. 37- 'Research and innovation' of the new Frontex's Regulation and starting the implementation of the Delegation Agreement between Frontex and the EC concerning agreed projects pertaining to the work programme 2018–2020 of Horizon 2020; - b) Increased Frontex's and MSs' awareness and knowledge on border security research and innovation/latest border control technologies available, and contribute to research results useful for the border guard community; border guard community better bridged with the communities involved in research, innovation and in developing border security; - c) Solutions identified for a rethinking of the current status quo on managing/setting up security related research and potential implementation in practice; - d) Explored possibilities for cross-border joint procurement of border security equipment/services. | 1 | 96,586.60 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <p>a. Following several meetings at technical level (DG Home – Frontex), a meeting between the management of the Capacity Building Division (Frontex) and Migration, Mobility and Innovation Directorate (DG Home) to discuss on the theme of border security research and innovation took place on 7 September 2018. Both sides agreed that in view of a broader capacity development process within Frontex, in the light of the forthcoming new Regulation and in view of ongoing discussions on Horizon Europe, it is appropriate to reach a mutual understanding and to concretise how to implement the current article 37 (related to research and innovation) of the Frontex' mandate. The importance of having research brought closer to operations was also mentioned, this being the only way to ensure that expenditure on research can effectively lead to a useful output and ultimately attract investment.</p> <p>Mutual understanding was reached that Frontex should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide technical and operational direction for the European Border and Coast Guard (EBCG) domain in line with the EC policy priorities; • contribute to the programming exercise; • contribute to the evaluation of the submitted proposals under Horizon calls; • participate in project monitoring and steering by acting as a key player in the procurement processes. <p>In 2018, the project manager coordinated Frontex's involvement (at the request of the EC) in the evaluation of the proposals received under the WP 2018 of Horizon 2020 and participated together with other Frontex representatives as evaluator in this process.</p> <p>b. Objective achieved through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the bi-annual meetings with the industry and coordinating the dialogue with companies/research community on different topics; - the workshop on EU-funded border security research projects; - the workshop on border security research and innovative solutions/technologies. <p>c. Solutions provided in the study of border security research elaborated by Rand institute (UK) were analysed and certain proposals will be taken on board; the recent change in the RIU's structure model gives already the new orientations for managing/setting up security-related research and a synergic effect of all the actions undertaken to enhance the research component. A study on joint cross-border procurement was outsourced to Corvers and Vtrek (NL); a workshop on this theme, with the MSs border guard authorities and Frontex, was held. The study was delivered to Frontex and presented internally.</p> | | | |

4.9. Situation monitoring

- **FSC-1 Eurosur Fusion Services/Copernicus:** In accordance with the EUROSUR regulation, provision of European Situational Picture (ESP) and Common Pre-Frontier Intelligence Picture (CPIP) based on (close to) real-time monitoring. This includes the delivery of surveillance and environmental data under Eurosur Fusion Services umbrella supporting immediate decision-making process and situational awareness.
 - Provision of situation monitoring services to Frontex and its stakeholders, including other EU institutions such as Europol and the support to the EU Policy Cycle/EMPACT.
 - Fusion of services and data to support the implementation of European Coast Guard Functions.
- **FSC-2 Enhancement and integration of Eurosur capabilities and services:** Enhancement and integration of services in order to support situational awareness and reaction capabilities.
- Further development and implementation of the European Border Surveillance Framework (EUROSUR) and promoting the operational integration of EUROSUR into border control and surveillance activities across the EU.
- **FSC-3 Coordinated European Monitoring Services:** Delivery of real-time monitoring services for Frontex and its stakeholders, by establishing a European Monitoring Hub in Frontex HQ.
 - Provision of real-time monitoring services on EU external borders and pre-frontier areas.
 - Contributing to the creation of the European Situational Picture in order to:
 - support operational activities coordinated by the Agency in third countries;
 - assure centralised command and control/coordination of Agency's monitoring activities in pre-frontier areas;
 - establish and enhance collaboration with external stakeholders (i.e. MSs, European Union Agencies, bodies, offices, etc.);
 - offer real-time situational awareness;
 - promote a common, centralised-EU level- command and control mechanism to facilitate the inter-agency implementation of the CG functions
- **FSC-4 Copernicus delegation agreement management:** Implementation of Copernicus programme, including horizontal coordination of Copernicus-related initiatives and related activities in the Earth Observation domain.
- **FSC-5 European Monitoring Hub/Delivery of Frontex's Situational Picture:**
 - delivery of situation monitoring and Information Exchange Services and related service management support.
 - delivery of enhanced operational media monitoring services.
 - establishment of a 24/7 Duty Officer Service.
 - upgrade of Frontex's situation monitoring infrastructure.
- **FSC-6 Crisis management support:** Fully developed crisis management framework and structure with swift response mechanisms in place.
- **FSC-8 Liaison Officers to Member States:** Please see under Strategic Action Area 2.11. – Liaison Officer in Member States and Third Countries
- **FSC-9 Information and data management for situational picture:** Collection and processing of the Agency operational data for situation monitoring and operational information exchange purposes. Single situational picture for the Agency: a creation of a single hub for handling geospatial imagery information from other EU Agencies and commercial partners.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|------------------|----|----|
|-------------|------------------|----|----|

| | | | |
|--|---|-----------|-------------------------|
| FSC-01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The delivery of these products and services contributes to the short-term/immediate decision-making process and situational awareness, including enhanced reaction capabilities. - Situation monitoring services contribute to the situational awareness of EU institutions. | 10 | 8,150,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The EFS continued to support Member States and other partners with situation monitoring and information exchange capabilities. In 2018, the EFS contribution included 937 optical satellite images (16% increase), 2,313 vessel detection satellite images (87% increase), 34 reports on tracked vessels of interest (72% decrease), 37 vessels of interest tracked in total (38% decrease), and 491 activated vessel anomaly searches (44% increase). | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FSC-02 | The services are regularly upgraded, integrated and tailored to the needs of Frontex stakeholders (EU Agencies, MSs and Frontex internal) | | Budgeted under ICT-01 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Seventeen fully-fledged, tailor-made services delivered on a permanent and upon-request basis. Following feedback received during operational trials, workshops and dedicated meetings, these services have been or are in a process of to be updated to meet the needs of requestor and reflect the technological progress. Increase in service requests in comparison to 2017 by 24%. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FSC-03 | Multipurpose real-time monitoring of pre-frontier areas delivered to Frontex and its stakeholders (MS, EU Agencies and other partners). Situational picture and awareness is supported by real-time monitoring services including during multipurpose operations | 10 | 1,000,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance (MAS) activities were extended to new geographical areas, and in 2018 covered the Central Mediterranean, the Western Balkans, the Aegean Sea, the Black Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. For the first time in the Agency's history, a Remotely-Piloted Aircraft was used to support its activities during MAS surveillance activities south of Portugal. This effort translated to 4,924 migrants being detected in the Central Mediterranean and reported to the competent national authorities for follow-up actions (search and rescue and law enforcement cases) and 635 migrants being spotted inland of the Western Balkans and reported to the competent national authority (cross-border crime cases). | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FSC-04 | Implementation of Copernicus programme, including horizontal coordination of Copernicus related initiatives and related activities in the Earth Observation domain. | 2 | 8,569,000 ²⁹ |

²⁹ Resources provided by an external grant from the European Commission (DG GROW).

| | | | |
|---|--|-----------|-----------|
| Delivered results | | | |
| Delivery of 11 Copernicus services under Frontex Border Surveillance component. Three new analytical services (pro-detect service; large pre-frontier area monitoring and MUSO analytical assessment) added as of mid-2018 (previously under Service Evolution). Regular and <i>ad-hoc</i> reporting in line with the obligations of the delegation agreement. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FSC-05 | Increased use of situation monitoring and information exchange services by Frontex stakeholders. Enhanced reaction capabilities for Frontex and its stakeholders, thanks to 24/7 duty service | 30 | 700,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| In 2018, Frontex launched 24/7 duty service allowing for a round-the-clock monitoring of the situation at the borders and in the pre-frontier areas. Since 1 October, a team of 13 Senior Duty Officers is dedicated to supporting this task. As many as 4,023 situation monitoring reports produced enhanced the situational picture at the borders (14% decrease compared to 2017), 41,039 incidents were detected (4% decrease), reported, and validated in JORA (including 124 serious incidents), 7,848 JORA users were provided with an access to JORA (62% increase), 131 requests for information on operational data were processed by the Senior Duty Officers team, and 6 891 documents were uploaded to FOSS (4% decrease). | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FSC-06 | Crisis management procedures and policies safeguarding the fulfilment of Agency's tasks. | 3 | 500,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Final draft of the Event Response Policy was developed outlining the Agency's mechanism to cope with emergency type of situations. In September, a two days Frontex's Crisis Management Exercise was organised with a primary focus on the Strategic Response Team. The aim of this table top exercise was to test Frontex's Event Response Plan and decision-making processes in crisis scenarios. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|---|----|---------|
| FSC-09 | Unique Frontex situational picture via a central hub. | 5 | 500,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| In 2018, a decision was made to create the Information Fusion Centre in order to consolidate the capacities of FSC Eurosur Fusion Services Sector and RAU Analytics Sector in addressing a growing internal and external demand for the Eurosur/Copernicus Fusion Services. This demand was reflected in 2018 in the stakeholders' rising interest in satellite data, vessel tracking information, and Multipurpose Aerial Surveillance. 2018 marked also an enhanced cooperation with EFS stakeholders – EMSA, EFCA and EU SatCen, and an enhanced Copernicus Programme implementation. | | | |

4.10 International and European cooperation

- **IEC-1 Establishing and/or enhancing cooperation with the priority third countries:** based on the priorities identified in the Frontex's International Cooperation Strategy 2018–2020, developing and maintaining cooperation with the priority third countries, particularly those neighbouring the EU and those countries of origin and transit for illegal migration.
- **IEC-2 Implementation of technical assistance projects in third countries:** programme and project management in all phases of the project cycle, acquisition of funds, preparation of new proposals, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Coordination and implementation of projects funded by external grants under Title IV.
- **IEC-3 Cooperation with EU Institutions, offices, bodies and agencies and international organisations:** developing cooperation with the EU partners as well as international organisations, including through working arrangements, annual cooperation plans, and regular staff-to-staff and strategic meetings.
- **IEC-4 Frontex Liaison Officers to Member States:** Deployment of Liaison Officers to the selected Member States, in order to act as an interface between the Agency and National Border Management Authorities. Concluding respective Memorandums of Understanding between Frontex and the Member States.
- **IEC-5 Frontex Liaison Officers in third countries:** deployment of up to two additional FLOs to the priority third countries. Concluding respective administrative arrangements with the EEAS/EU delegations.
- **IEC-6 Back-office for the Frontex's Liaison Officers networks:** setting-up and maintenance of a well-functioning back-office to support, monitor and guide the FLOs, analyse and process relevant outcomes of their activities (reports) for the use of various business entities, and facilitate their interaction with the Frontex's HQ.
- **IEC-7 International and European Cooperation repository and reporting:** periodical reporting to the EU Institutions and bodies on the Agencies' cooperation with international and European partners; ensuring cross-divisional coordination and implementation of the Frontex International Cooperation Strategy 2018-2020; development of an information repository for engagement with international and European partners; preparing briefings, policy papers, and official correspondence and facilitate visits by partners.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| IEC-01 | Cooperation with third countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - engagement of the relevant authorities across all strands of Frontex's work; - capacity building activities organised; - deployment of Frontex's staff to EUBAM Libya; - updated/new working arrangements; - enhanced coordination and information exchange. | 10 | 381,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhanced engagement with the priority third countries through familiarisation visits, Frontex missions and other activities; - facilitating MS cooperation with third countries through joint projects, e.g. Italy/Egypt ITEPA project, aiming to set-up an International Training at Egyptian Police Academy – ITEPA; - cooperation and support to CSDP missions, particularly: EUBAM Libya (through short term deployments and ad-hoc advice); EUCAP Sahel Niger (through FLO in Niger); start of cooperation with EUCAP Sahel Mali; visit of EUBAM Rafah; - negotiations on new working arrangement with Gambia and further advanced on negotiations with the authorities of Senegal, Niger and Guinea; - negotiations of updates to previously concluded working arrangements with the Ministries of Interior of Albania and Georgia; - Turkey and the Western Balkan region continued to be important priorities across various areas of the Agency's work; - a Cooperation Plan concluded between Frontex and the General Inspectorate of Border Police of Moldova for the years 2018–2020. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| IEC-02 | Capacity building and technical assistance projects: Improved /enhanced capacity of beneficiary countries Implementation of technical assistance projects under Title IV – total estimated costs from the start date until 31/12/2018: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EaP IBM Capacity Building project; - IPA II; - Strengthening the Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC) - implemented by SAM/RAU; - EU4BorderSecurity - project start date 1 December 2018. | 1 4* 4* 5* 5* | 17,000 3,112,000 3,030,000 995,000 0.00 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capacity of relevant authorities in third countries improved and operational cooperation and interoperability with the EU MS and Frontex enhanced. - EaP IBM capacity building project: project implemented, coordinated and successfully concluded in December 2018. More than 120 activities and 83 training sessions took place, as a result of which 1,200 border and customs officials were trained on various IBM topics. - IPA II ('Regional support to protection-sensitive migration management in the Western Balkans and Turkey'): implementation of phase I continued according to plan. - IPA II phase II of the project conceptualised and grant agreement signed. - Strengthening the Africa-Frontex Intelligence Community (AFIC): implementation continued according to plan. - EU4BorderSecurity: project activities conceptualised, inception phase started in December 2018. | | | |
| * CAs foreseen under Delegation Agreements | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|---|----|--------|
| IEC-03 | Cooperation with the EU partners and international organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased cooperation with EU partners including with customs and within the European Coast Guard Functions; - evidence-based contributions to EU policy and decision making processes; - new working arrangements, setting the framework for personal data exchange; - enhanced inter-agency cooperation in multilateral fora. | 6 | 20,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular, active participation in the Customs Cooperation Working Party (CCWP) as well as being a strategic counterpart in the customs environment, in particular in the relationship with the Customs Eastern and South-Eastern Land Border Expert Team (CELBET). - Support to the EU policy makers and legislators on numerous files by providing technical and operational advice (e.g. development of civilian CSDP compacts). - Cooperation plans were revised and updated to structure and streamline daily cooperation with partners such as Europol and CEPOL. The exchange of personal data was in depth discussed with Europol and with EDPS. - Dialogue and preparatory work continued on new working arrangements with a number of partners (e.g. OSCE, ICAO, and EASA). Official start of negotiations for an updated working arrangement with Eurojust. - Close cooperation with sister agencies, in particular Europol, EASO, eu-LISA, CEPOL and Eurojust, within the framework of the Justice and Home Affairs (JHA) Agencies Network as well as through bilateral partnerships. - The joint Frontex-Europol Management Boards meeting was a remarkable event, showing the strengthening partnership and increasing cooperation of the two agencies. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| IEC-04 | Frontex Liaison Officers to EU Member States: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deployment of Liaison Officers in selected Member States/SAC, to act as interface between the Agency and national border management authorities. - Concluding respective Memorandums of Understanding between Frontex and the Member States. - Support collection of information and monitoring of irregular migration situation. Enhanced situation monitoring and information exchange with all relevant actors. | 11 | 52,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - By the end of 2018, all 11 FLOs were recruited and joined the Agency for pre-deployment training. - 4 FLOs deployed to the main seat of their cluster. - 16 MoUs with the MS/SAC were finalised by the end of 2018. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR | FR |
|---|--|----|-----------|
| IEC-05 | Frontex Liaison Officers to third countries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - enhanced coordination and two-way communication with other EU actors in third countries, such as EMLOs and CSDP missions; - enhanced situational/risk analysis; - deployment of up to 2 additional FLOs to priority third countries; - concluding respective Administrative Arrangements (AA) with the EEAS/EU Delegations. | 3 | 51,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The FLOs to Turkey, Niger and WB -Serbia continued to cooperate with the relevant authorities within their countries and liaising with the HQ. - Information received from the FLOs is processed internally, analysed and integrated in the outputs of the Agency. It has contributed to an enhanced situational awareness. - FLOs further continued to work together with other partners, e.g. EMLOs, ILOs. - The Agency prepared the grounds for deployment of FLO in Senegal, which is planned for 2019. - The negotiation of the AAs with the EEAS continued in 2018. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| IEC-06 | FLO back-office: effectively prepare the FLOs for their deployment, support and facilitate the work of the FLOs, ensured follow-up, and enhanced internal cooperation and communication. | 5 | 46,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A functional back-office (BO) established in IEC. Corporate Governance also provides support for the deployments. - Pre-deployment training curricula has been developed and all 11 MS FLOs have completed or are in the process of completing training. - FLOs have a dedicated BO member that acts as their focal point to support them and keep an updated picture of their activities. - The BO is engaging in internal consultations to optimise the reporting of the FLOs and guarantee the information reaches the relevant people (on a need-to-know basis) ensuring timely and effective follow-up. - Two biannual gatherings of the FLOs organised. - Preparing the negotiations of MoUs with the MS/SAC by liaising with both the internal and external partners. It also coordinated the ongoing negotiation with the EEAS for the collocation of FLOs in EU Delegations in third countries. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| IEC-07 | IEC repository, reporting and horizontal tasks Internal coordination and effective advisory role to senior management | 2 | 36,000.00 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Frontex reported to the European Parliament on its cooperation with third countries in 2017. - IT tool developed for the MS/SAC to report on their cooperation with other MS/SAC outside the framework of Frontex, as well on their cooperation with third countries, pursuant to Article 17 (1 and 3) of the Schengen Borders Code and Article 8(2) of the EBCG Regulation. - Contribution to ensuring cross-divisional coordination of external action and implementation of the Frontex International Cooperation Strategy 2018-2020. - Numerous briefings, policy papers and official correspondence as well as facilitated visits of external partners to Frontex, e.g. delegations of the Armenia, Australia, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, The Gambia, Guinea, United States. | | | |

4.11 Media and public relations

- **COM-1 Update of Frontex visual identity guideline:**

- The current visual identity introduced in 2012 works well. Its shape, colours and visual elements are in line with the messages of Frontex and the concept of integrated border management.
- Since the visual identity was launched in 2012 a valuable insight has been gathered from the users, and some functional issues were identified.
- When the new EBCG regulation (currently under discussion in the EP and the European Council) is adopted the European Border and Coast Guard Agency will also update its visual identity.

- **COM-2 Content production:**

In the era of online media, visual and multimedia communication, Frontex must produce content that can be (re-)edited, (re-)distributed and (re-)purposed according to the different information needs of specific audiences and multitude of channels in use. The MPR team currently manages Frontex Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube accounts which all gained substantial number of followers in 2018.

- **COM-3 Multilingual online communication:**

- Frontex, as one of the EU agencies, is encouraged to make information about its role and activities available in all EU official languages.
- In 2018, MPR team launched Frontex's website in all 24 EU official languages.
- Frontex videos are translated, with subtitles available in nine EU languages. This practice shall continue and the production of subtitles will be included into the overall video production process.

- **COM-4 Online communication:**

- Sharing information with its audiences is crucial to fulfilling the commitment to accountability and transparency of Frontex. Frontex is communicating on a daily basis with its stakeholders providing relevant and timely information about its activities and decisions that might affect them.
- While traditional communication methods such as print are still important, today stakeholders have come to expect information to be available in more convenient online formats, including websites and social media tools. Trends that can be observed globally – including increased internet use, the use of social media and ever changing online demographics – indicate that also Frontex stakeholders are searching for real-time information on social media.
- The role of communications has evolved and continues to progress with the exponential growth of social media and the continuous advancement of mobile technologies and the increasing availability of Wi-Fi. It means that the public now has the ability to access, customise and forward information wherever and whenever they want. Individuals can choose to receive information and instant updates on topics they have decided are beneficial and relevant to them.
- The use of social media tools for engagement and information sharing purposes is an integral part of all communication plans.
- In 2018, a digital communication strategy was created to streamline online communication on platforms used by Frontex (Frontex websites, EU web-based platforms, social media, and content-sharing platforms).

- **COM- 5 Internal communication:** Frontex has to ensure that its staff have access to necessary information, so that they are well informed, and are well aware of the Agency's decision-making process.
 - The on-going organisational change Frontex is going through, and it needs to be properly communicated to staff.
 - Frontex is currently creating modern internal communication platforms (i.e. modern intranet solution) which will be populated with quality content.
 - With significant increase in staff numbers Frontex is also focused on induction training for newcomers and a variety of internal events (birthday breakfast with the ED; January and mid-year address to staff; Happy Hour; Family Day; Internal Day; Christmas Party) that create a strong sense of belonging.
 - 2018 changes also required provisions of communication training for different staff categories, including media training, English writing and presentation skills.
- **COM-6 Media relations:** giving interviews and background briefings to the press was the core part of press office work.
- **COM-7 Organisation of press conferences:** press office organised press conferences for ED/DED in major European capitals and in operational settings.
- **COM-8 Media monitoring:** Monitoring of press coverage of Frontex, countering negative voices, writing rebuttals. This included mainstream and social media.
- **COM-9 Online communication:** writing for Frontex website and other written communication materials.
- **COM-10 Management of Frontex Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn accounts.**
- **COM-11 Production of short animations, infographics and videos:**

MPR team produced 7 short videos illustrating the activities of the Agency. All have been subtitled in all EU languages and published on Frontex multilingual website.
- **COM-12 Media training sessions:** MPR conducted several media training sessions for Frontex staff and officers deployed in Frontex operations enabling them to participate in media interviews.
- **COM-13 Crisis communication:** MPR participated in the preparation of scenarios for crisis exercises and took part in the in-house crisis exercise.
- **COM-14 Organisation of the annual spokesperson meeting:**

Press office manages a network of spokespersons of all national border guard authorities in MS and SAC and organises annual meetings for the network. In 2018, the spokespersons meeting took place in June.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|---|----|---------|
| COM-01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New Frontex visual identity guideline. - Frontex visual identity policy. - Graphical support to artefacts (i.e. flags, plates) production according to the new guidelines. | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The development of the new Frontex visual identity was postponed since the new Frontex regulation (currently under discussion) might require a full update of the Agency's visual identity. The MPR team continued to provide support to all agency units on questions related to the use of Frontex visual identity in all communication materials (publications, videos, corporate gifts, etc.). The MPR team produced a large number of media products namely, photos, videos, and animations both in operational areas and at the HQ, for internal and external audiences. Many photo and video materials were entered into LENS and were made available to all Frontex entities for use in publications, presentations, etc. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-02 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quality content (text, hyper-text, graphics, and video) provided. - Communication support to Frontex staff in editing, video production, graphic design and publications production. | 5 | 160,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| MPR team produced, edited and screened content targeted at external audiences. This included all content produced for Frontex website and social media channels, as well as publications and videos. The new communications products developed in 2018 included eight short movies about Frontex activities, eight feature stories and 24 profiles of officers deployed in Frontex operations. The overall number of publications produced by Frontex continued to grow and reached over 100 reports, training manuals and brochures. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-03 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased number of content pieces on language versions of Frontex mini-websites. - All movies published online were translated into five EU languages. | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| In 2018, Frontex launched its website in all 24 official EU languages. All videos on Frontex website were subtitled in 24 languages. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-04 | Tendering documentation for the new content management system, hosting and monitoring services. Digital communication strategy. | 1 | 40,000 |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| In 2018, MPR team developed and implemented a digital communication strategy and Frontex expanded its presence on social media with a launch of Frontex Facebook page. In the first four months we published 66 posts and gained nearly 4,000 followers. Last year the total number of followers on Frontex LinkedIn page increased by 99,4% (from 6,118 to 12,202). | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |

| | | | |
|--|---|-----------|-----------|
| COM-05 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intranet solution populated by quality content. - Events helping to build horizontal information-sharing culture. - Communication training courses. | 2 | 170,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The intranet is to be launched in 2019 and the internal communication team was actively involved in its development. Several new internal events aimed at building internal cohesion and bringing growing numbers of staff together were launched in 2018. These included Family Day, monthly birthday breakfast with the ED, Happy Hour every last Tuesday of the month. In addition, the MPR team organised the Internal Day, January and mid-year address by the ED and Frontex Christmas Party. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-06 | Timely response to all media requests. | 3 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The press office continued to reply to a large number of media requests and organised media visits to operational areas. In 2018, some 50 journalists visited operational areas in Spain, Greece, Italy and Croatia. Furthermore, 30 were embedded on vessels, helicopters or aircraft during patrolling activities. In addition to that, MPR carried out a wide range of outreach activities. We hosted 560 guests in Frontex HQ in Warsaw and participated in a number of conferences and panel discussions. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-07 | Ten press briefings in a year. These events frequently include booking a venue, simultaneous translation and translation of press materials. | 0.50 | 1,500 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The press office organised six press conferences and briefings held by the Executive director for journalists. These took place in Madrid, Brussels, Dakar, Athens, Sopot and Algheriras. We also published 39 press releases on migratory flows and different activities. The press releases were often accompanied by short videos published on different Frontex social media channels. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-08 | Weekly press coverage analyses. | 0.25 | 4,128 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The press office provided senior management with media analysis report every week. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-09 | Press package. New general brochure about the new agency. | 0.25 | 0 |

| | | | |
|---|--|-----------|-----------|
| Delivered results | | | |
| The general brochure about the agency <i>Frontex at a glance</i> was updated and many other publications (brochures, leaflets, etc.) were edited and proofread by the editorial team. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-10 | Daily tweets. | 0.1 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| In 2018, the number of Frontex followers grew to 21,000 and the number of tweets published reached 277. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-11 | Production of 6 videos. | 0.5 | 90,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The MPR team produced eight short videos about the activities of Frontex. All were subtitled in 24 EU languages. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-12 | Organisation of five media training sessions | 0.1 | 14,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| In 2018, MPR organised four media training sessions for Liaison Officers and Brussels Office representative, Press Office, Operations and FSC. In total, more than 30 people were trained. A separate media training was offered to the 24 Press Officers from national border and police authorities during the annual Press Officers Meeting. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|-----|--------|
| COM-13 | Organisation of a crisis exercise. | 0.2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| The crisis exercise was organised by the FSC who is now leading the crisis management project. MPR was involved in the preparation of the exercise, which included drafting crisis scenarios. Press office participated in the two day exercise and was in charge of crisis communication. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| COM-14 | Organise a two-day meeting with spokespersons in Warsaw. | 0.1 | 17,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| An annual meeting of spokespersons was organised in Warsaw in June, some 30 representatives of press services from the national border authorities attended. | | | |

4.12 Public access to documents

LPU-5 Transparency Office: handling public access to documents applications in line with MB Decision No 25/2016.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|---|----|----|
| LPU-5 | Correct and efficient handling of the significantly increasing amount of PAD applications and the management of sensitive operational information by the Transparency Office. | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Despite the significant increase of PAD applications, the Transparency Office handled all applications within the prescribed deadlines and adhered to the applicable legal frameworks. In this regard, the swift cooperation with PAD case-handlers from different Frontex entities proved to be indispensable. | | | |

4.13 Fundamental rights

- **FRO-1 FR in JO:**

Support and enhance Fundamental Rights (FR) monitoring and reporting on operational activities regarding multipurpose joint activities that sustain the operational presence in areas at the external borders exposed to specific and disproportionate pressure as well as facing significant uncertainties; including consistent action in line with operational reaction mechanism laid down in the EUROSUR Regulation.

- **FRO-2 Monitoring incidents during JO:**

Intensify the tailored concepts of different types of joint operations (including return activities) and target the alignment of the operations coordinated by Frontex with the priorities of the Internal Security Strategy and EU Policy Cycle.

- **FRO-3 Individual complaints:**

Set up and run an effective complaints mechanism to ensure monitoring of fundamental rights at the operational areas.

- **FRO-4 FR analysis and research:**

Intensify and assess the tailored concepts of different types of joint operations (including return activities) and target the alignment of the operations coordinated by Frontex with the priorities of the Internal Security Strategy and EU Policy Cycle.

- **FRO-5 FR in return matters:**

- Intensify the tailored concepts of return activities and target the alignment of return interventions by Frontex with the priorities of the Internal Security Strategy and EU Policy Cycle.

- **FRO-6 FR awareness and training:**

To embed a respect for the principles of Fundamental Rights in the communication culture of Frontex.

- **FRO-7 Revision and implementation of FR Strategy and AP:**

To embed a respect for the principles of Fundamental Rights in the culture of Frontex.

- **FRO-8 Support to the Frontex Consultative Forum on fundamental rights:**

To provide administrative and technical support regarding the preparation, implementation and management of the work of the Consultative Forum in their advisory capacity to the Executive Director and the Management Board.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|----|---------|
| FRO-01 | Fundamental rights impact in JO/SIR reports. | 3 | 80,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Observations on most of the operational plans, on the Handbook on OPLAN for maritime operations, and on the guide for readmission operations were provided. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FRO-02 | Monitor the incidents which occurred during JO. | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Fundamental Rights Office (FRO) received three serious incident reports, acted as a coordinator and followed-up the cases. Field visits undertaken to operational areas for monitoring purposes. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FRO-03 | Fundamental rights monitoring system, structure/implementation of the new complaint mechanism. | 1 | 250,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Fundamental Rights Office (FRO) ensured the daily running of the mechanism and case management. FRO further developed and disseminated communication materials such as a booklet and a poster to raise awareness about the complaints mechanism. Hard copies of the booklet are available in operational areas and on Frontex website in 11 languages. A video information for on complaints is also being produced. A new tool for submission of complaints from a smartphone device is under production. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FRO-04 | Evaluation reports, risk analysis on FR, Reports on Fundamental Rights matters. | 3 | 15,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| FRO provided observations on the impact of FR to six FERs of 2018 and provided advice on FR-related matters to internal and external stakeholders. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|---|----|--------|
| FRO-05 | Fundamental Rights contribution in return-related matters (monitoring, training, policy documents). | 2 | 10,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| FRO supported the delivery of training sessions and briefings as well as the setup and running of the pool of monitors. FRO received/collected and analysed regularly the numerous reports of the monitors that took part in return operations. FRO delivered input on the guidance to respect children's rights in return policies and practices and on the EC Communication on the protection of children in migration. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FRO-06 | Fundamental Rights embedded in Frontex communication. | 2 | 10,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| FRO team has actively taken part in numerous training sessions and internal briefings (newcomers, fundamental rights, Common Core Curriculum, child protection etc.). | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FRO-07 | Revised Frontex Fundamental Rights Strategy. | 2 | 30,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| FRO supported the revision of the Fundamental Rights Strategy and provided proposals also on the corresponding Action Plan, in particular on child protection by hiring a consultant to provide recommendations to the FRO, for the design of the Fundamental Rights Strategy. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| FRO-08 | Sustainability of Consultative Forum (CF) work. | 2 | 70,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| FRO supported CF in line with the working methods of the CF and under the CF Secretariat located with FRO offices which acted as focal point for CF requests and liaising with internal entities; FRO regularly reported to the CF. | | | |

4.14 Data protection

- **DPO-1 Increasing the culture and awareness of data protection culture within the organisation:** the expanded mandate of the agency holds a higher impact towards the processing activities upon personal data both in administrative and operational data.
- **DPO-2 Data protection supervision:** internal supervision of data processing operations, including data protection audit on the spot where personal data are collected, pre and post introduction of 'New 45', and liaison with European Data Protection Supervisor.
- **DPO-3 Compliance with data protection regulation:** Regulation 45/2001 will be substituted mid-2018. Until then, most administrative data processing operations should be operating in full compliance with the legal framework.
- **DPO-4 Preparation for the introduction of a new DP Regulation:** the 'New 45' will replace the existing regulation dealing with the processing of personal data, bringing new rights and new obligations over the processing of personal data.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|--|----|----|
| DPO-01 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide induction training module for newcomers on basics on data protection. - Provide training module on basic concepts on data protection for Directors, Heads of Units and Heads of Sectors. | 1 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Eleven training sessions for newcomers delivered. Two training sessions on data protection delivered to FLOs. Two training sessions delivered to data controllers, 1 provided by EDPS, 1 by DPO. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| DPO-02 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation of annual audit planning. - Preparation of letters of engagement. - Preparation of three-year annual audit plan. - Preparation of documentation for internal auditing on data protection. | 0 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Not accomplished. The possibility of conducting audit comes when there is a certain level of maturity within the organisation, together with resources available. The introduction of a new data protection regulation, the implementation of the 2016 mandate which lead into new processing operations, and the roll out of new ICT solutions processing personal data extinguished resources both in time and human to be able to plan and conduct auditing actions. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|-----|----|
| DPO-03 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finish the mapping of all processing operations conducted in Corporate Governance. - Complete notifications related to Corporate Governance. - Complete prior notifications to the EDPS related to Operations Division. | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| All processing operations at Frontex mapped: 188 processing operations identified, 53 notifications received, 12 finalised. The notifications addressed belonged to Corporate Governance or Offices. Prior notification to the EDPS belonging to Operations Division finalised. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| DPO-04 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation and delivery of training related to the introduction and changes of the 'New 45' to all staff. - Preparation of templates, matrixes, registers and risk indicators for compliance with 'New 45'. - Preparation and approval of new rules referring to the application of new data protection regulation. | 1.5 | 0 |
| Delivered Results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Three training sessions related to the new regulation provided. - Templates and guidelines related to the new regulation issued. - New rules on application of new data protection regulation for operational personal data presented to the management board. | | | |

4.15 Governance

Budget, Financial and Corporate Services

- **BFCS-1 Provision of corporate services:**

Provide miscellaneous frontline service support: administrative support for meetings and conferences, reception supervision, library, office supplies, expatriate services and administrative *ad hoc* support.

- Provision of overall facility management regarding the premises: management of the lease and associated contracts, canteen management, insuring and maintaining the premises, inventory and asset management.
- Provision of expatriate services.
- Provision of corporate travel services and oversight over the implant office of the contracted travel agency and management of bonus programmes for airlines.
- Further development and launch of the document management system in close cooperation with ICT.

- **BFCS-2 Provision of budget-related and financial services:**

Planning and budget management (in close cooperation with the HR and Planning Officer) including activity-based budgeting.

- Budget closure, external audit and discharge.
- Provision of financial services: data entry, financial initiation, financial verification, authorisation, financial controls.
- Development of the regulatory financial framework and advice in financial matters.
- Provision of financial and ABAC-related training.

- **BFCS-3 Revision of the current and future needs regarding premises and infrastructure:**

Ensure the Agency has the building and infrastructure capacity corresponding to its needs.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|----|------------|
| BFCS-1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provisions of functioning premises and relevant corporate services are supplied on time and in good quality. - The premises offer appropriate working conditions and the inventory is properly managed. - Support from an administrative and financial side regarding travel arrangements in the agency. - | 22 | 13,192,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The premises were kept in good working condition and functioned properly, including operation of the canteen, kitchenettes and cleaning service. - Inventory of assets was properly managed and the annual physical inventory check was conducted successfully. - Office supplies, stationery, processing of claims and other amenities were provided on time and in good quality. - Administrative support to meetings and events was provided in a timely and professional manner and in good quality, including the organisation of the European Border and Coast Guard Day. Reception was fully taken over by Frontex staff and functioned to a high professional standard. - Various type of assistance to expatriate staff was ensured on time, effectively and professionally. - Travel arrangements were made on time, missions were approved and claims processed effectively. - The document management system was rolled out in close cooperation with ICT and is running properly. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| BFCS-2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Steering of the creation of the budget, provision (and further development) of budget monitoring tools. - Ensure that the budget is properly closed and can be audited. - Support smoothly the overall financial management. - Ensure compliance with the existing regulatory framework in the remit of the unit. - Keep staff members updated with the financial management system. | 17 | N/A |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Budget monitoring tools were developed, including monitoring on delayed payments which led to a decrease in comparison to 2017. - Budget reviews were conducted on a quarterly basis. - Draft budgets were provided in a timely manner as well as all relevant documents for the discharge procedure were prepared. - An <i>ad hoc</i> monitoring tool was put in place for the year-end-procedure enabling simplification and smoother process. - Training sessions on budget and financial matters were provided. - Data entry, financial initiation (particularly on the revenue side and for processing travel related invoices), financial verification function were provided in a timely manner. - Financial advice was continuously provided to business units, including the further development of the financial regulatory framework. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| BFCS-3 | Revision of the current and future needs regarding premises and infrastructure; ensure appropriate working conditions. | 6 | 5,059,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| In view of the rapid growth of the Agency and the need for working space five new office floors were opened for use. Reconstruction of other floors started in order to ensure more office space in the HQ and will continue in 2019. Necessary repairs and maintenance of existing facilities were ensured. | | | |

Human resources management

- **HRS-1 Efficient and timely recruitment and selection processes:** preparing and running recruitment and selection procedures based on the identified competencies (using competency

framework) and using the implemented e-recruitment tool.

- **HRS-2 Allocation of human resources according to the agency's needs:** performing workforce assessment. Implementing working time monitoring. Developing qualitative workforce assessment tool. Monitoring, assessing and if needed adjusting the mobility policy.
- **HRS-3 Learning efficiently provided to staff members. Annual appraisals run according to the applicable rules and standards:** learning for staff members organised on the basis of proper needs analysis. Annual appraisal run in accordance with the processes defined in the implementing rules and according to the common standards. Newcomers' induction process monitored, assessed and if needed re-designed in order to provide newly joining staff with necessary and reliable information and induction/on-boarding support. Leadership and management programme for middle managers and heads of sectors monitored, assessed and if needed adjusted.
- **HRS-4 HR as a strategic partner:** business partners' model monitored, assessed and, if needed, adjusted. Leadership and management programme run and evaluated. Follow-up planning prepared and implemented. Regular management training offered on different topics.
- **HRS-5 Efficient establishment and execution of rights and entitlements:** financial entitlements paid on time and according to the rights established by PMO. Working conditions and leaves (leaves, working time, sick leaves) managed according to the applicable rules. Personal files of staff members complete and kept according to the personal data protection regulation. Medical services provided in the HQs location for improved management of absences due to sickness. New HR system (Sysper 2) implemented for automated management of HR processes.
- **HRS-6 HR as a cultural change driver and facilitator:** internal communication strategy developed, implemented, monitored and evaluated. Change needs assessed, change management skills developed and initiatives launched.
- **HRS-7 HR expertise, processes and systems optimised business partners' model monitored, assessed and, if needed, adjusted:** staff survey and other analysis tools implemented and results followed up, aiming to provide advice to the management about human resources matters. HR KPIs identified and monitored; outcome monitored and regularly reported to management allowing sound decision-making based on the factual analysis of re-engineered HR processes.
- **HRS-8 HR processes based on applicable legal framework:** General Implementing Rules and Model Decisions of the Commission timely adopted. Number of Article 90 Staff Regulations requests and complaints decreased.

Security management

- **HRS-9 Implement and manage a comprehensive physical security programme to ensure Frontex premises are adequately protected against existing and potential threats.** Maintain an ongoing review of existing physical security measures, identify shortcomings and propose and implement improvements, as required. Contribute actively to the new HQ project in terms of defining security concept and specific measures.
- **HRS-10 Implement and manage a comprehensive personnel security program: identify the persons performing sensitive tasks in Frontex, in particular with regards to access to sensitive and EU classified information and systems and specific physical areas in cooperation with managers:** propose levels of security clearance. Manage the application process in cooperation with Directorate Security EC and MS NSAs. Follow up internally with respective staff and managers on the status of security clearances.
- **HRS-11 Ensure that sensitive and classified information is protected in line with the applicable EU and Frontex regulatory frameworks:** maintain an up-to-date internal policy framework on the protection of information, in line with the applicable EU network and best practices. Implement that framework in close cooperation with the relevant stakeholders. Follow up and review the level of implementation, take necessary steps to address potential shortcomings.
- **HRS-12 Contribute to the ICT activities in order to ensure that Frontex sensitive and classified information is adequately protected in Communication and Information Systems (CIS):** Contribute to the development of ICT related policies dealing with protection of sensitive and classified information.
- **HRS-13 Ensuring that Frontex personnel, information, buildings and equipment are adequately protected against threats:** safety and security measures in place in compliance with the overall internal security regulatory framework and in line with EU rules and best practices. This includes implementation of the applicable rules, including EU Classified Information, as well as liaison with EU and the Member State security services.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|---|----|---------|
| HRS-1 | Recruitment processes finalised in a proper time and applicants with proper knowledge, skills and competencies selected | 8 | 496,000 |

| Delivered results: 56 new recruitment procedures have been launched and 187 new staff selected and appointed | | | |
|---|---|-----|------------|
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-2 | Staff member allocated to different functions according to the organisational needs and possessed competencies. Mobility policy in force and used as a tool for allocation of resources according to the needs. | 1.6 | 0 |
| Delivered results: Re-structuring of the organisation made successfully with the reassignments of 106 staff members. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-3 | Learning delivered according to the yearly plan. Appraisals serving as a motivation tool and a career guidance. | 7 | 676,000 |
| Delivered results: Annual appraisal reports created form the basis for planning and organising various learning activities. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-4 | In the long term, the managers are HR ambassadors and HR is recognised as a strategic business partner for the management. | 4.2 | 0 |
| Delivered results: Successful continuation of implementation of the business partners' concept. Positive recognition of that concept among the managers. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-5 | Rights stemming from staff regulations legally correct and timely executed. | 8 | 37,500,000 |
| Delivered results: All financial and non-financial rights executed in a timely manner and in compliance with the existing rules and regulations. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-6 | Changes accepted and internalised by staff. | 1 | 0 |
| Delivered results: Assignments to new entities stemming from re-organisation project accepted by staff re-assigned accordingly. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|-----|--------|
| HRS-7 | HR effectively equipped to qualitatively and efficiently fulfil its role. | 1 | 0 |
| Delivered results: HR services empowered by new staff and new responsibilities. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-8 | Legal compliance of HR-related processes. | 0.2 | 0 |
| Delivered results: New policies and preparatory work for the adoption of implementing rules to Staff Regulations made. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-9 | Frontex premises and assets: personnel, information and equipment are adequately protected. | 19 | 23,300 |
| Delivered results: Implementation of security requirements enforcing physical security included in the planned restructuration of the ground floor of B building. Review of general security requirements and review extra protection as requested by Units on a floor-by-floor basis following planned reconstruction works. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-10 | To ensure that persons performing tasks for Frontex are appropriately vetted and security cleared. | 1 | 0 |
| Delivered results: Contacts with relevant National Security Authorities established in order to enforce better mutual cooperation and understanding of mutual needs. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-11 | Sensitive and classified information is adequately protected and compliance with the applicable regulatory framework is ensured. | 0.3 | 0 |
| Delivered results: Enforcement of existing regulatory framework. Establishment of a framework with relevant stakeholders. Arrangement for sharing EU classified information between the general secretariat of the Council, the European Commission, the European External Action Service, on the one part, and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, on the other signed. Participation in Council Security Committee. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|---|-----|---------|
| HRS-12 | Information processed in CIS is adequately protected and in line with the EU and Frontex legal framework. | 0.2 | 0 |
| Delivered results: Review of legal framework related to CIS in cooperation with ICT Security ongoing. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| HRS-13 | Frontex personnel, information, buildings and equipment are adequately protected. | 1.5 | 290,700 |
| Delivered results: Coordination of activities in relation to the protection of personnel, information, building and equipment. Participation in Council Security Committee and European Commission DAN meetings. | | | |

Legal and Procurement Affairs

- **LPU-1 Litigation and pre-litigation:** Legal and Procurement Unit (LPU) represents Frontex in front of the EU and national courts. Furthermore, LPU plays an important role in the internal pre-litigation stage and in the recovery of financial amounts due to court judgments.
- **LPU-2 Legal Helpdesk on Operational Issues:** LPU provides a legal helpdesk service to internal stakeholders on operational related matters.
- **LPU-3 Legal Helpdesk on Non-Operational Issues:** LPU provides a legal helpdesk service to internal stakeholders on non-operational related matters
- **LPU-4 Legal Deliverables:** quality control in the internal decision-making process (e.g. reviewing MB and ED Decisions, legal 'VISA', delegations of authority, Rules of Procedure), interpretation of legal instruments, handling Ombudsman matters.
- **LPU-6 Legal support on Frontex's new premises:** LPU provides support on the legal issues related to building of Frontex's new premises.
- **LPU-7 Supporting the EUAN:** LPU supports the chairing by Frontex of the European Union Agencies Network (EUAN) in part of 2018 focusing specifically on the Inter-Agency Legal Network (IALN).
- **LPU-8 Provision of regular procurement-related services:** planning and supporting regular procurement procedures in the agency. Also, implementing change management due to the merge between the Procurement Sector (of FCS) and the Legal Affairs Unit.
- **LPU-9 Provision of legal and procurement related services in relation to acquisition/lease of major technical equipment (T.E.):** 'Creative/complex procurement & contractual affairs': developing creative legal solutions, particularly given Frontex reinforced focus on the acquisition/leasing of major technical equipment/assets (T.E.).
- **LPU-10 Managing the External Experts' database:** Managing this database, along with various other support functions.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|---|-----|--------|
| LPU-01 | An acceptable level of overall litigation risk. | 1.5 | 26,750 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| A very successful year in pre-litigation & litigation with a 100% success-rate. All court cases won, no maladministration found by the EU Ombudsman. Claims totalling hundreds of thousands of euros were successfully defended. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| LPU-02 | Adequate legal advice in support of operational units | 3.5 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Extensive support provided on operational matters (e.g. OPLANS, MoUs on Frontex Liaison Officers etc.). The dedicated LEG Team for operational matters (LEG.OPS) is further developed. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| LPU-03 | Adequate legal advice in support of non-operational units. | 2.5 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Extensive support provided on non-operational matters (e.g. implementation of HQA agreement and Service Level Agreements). The dedicated LEG Team for governance matters (LEG.GOV) is further developed. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| LPU-04 | Legal deliverables of a high quality. | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Provided a quality control mechanism in the internal decision-making process, by reviewing: ED Decision, MB Decisions and various internal policies/guidelines etc. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected Results | HR | FR |
| LPU-06 | Reducing the potential impact of legal issues connected to building Frontex's new premises. | 0.5 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Provided legal support connected to building the new Frontex premises. In the process of being handed over to the 'Task force: new premises' | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|--|-----|----|
| LPU-07 | Supporting the successful chairing of both the EUAN and IALN. | 0.5 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Supported CGO in chairing the EUAN. Also, LPU chaired the IALN for six months. Both chairmanships were successful. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| LPU-08 | The smooth running of procurement procedures at the agency level. | 8 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successfully carried out a record-number of procurement procedures, while also working on the automation of workflows and the introduction of e-submission tool. - Detailed planning and monitoring of procurement procedures. - Provision of regular training sessions for Project Managers on technical specifications and constant inclusion of procurement as part of induction training for all new staff members. - The tender procedures fully complied with the principles of transparency, proportionality, equal treatment and non-discrimination. - All public procurement contracts were tendered on the broadest possible basis while for negotiated procedures below the Directive's thresholds (very low, low and medium value contracts), the minimum number of invited candidates was respected to ensure a balance between publicity and proportionality. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| LPU-09 | Producing creative legal solutions when it comes to Technical Equipment (TE) procedures. | 2 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Successfully handled/advised on a number of complex tender procedures. - Moreover, started preparations for major (heavy) technical equipment acquisitions (e.g. chartering vessels). Relevant meetings for the exchange of best practices and sharing of experience were held with other EU agencies and national authorities on complicated tenders of heavy assets. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| LPU-10 | Effective management of the external experts' database/support functions. | 1 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Processed a record number of applications for becoming an expert, resulting in a high number of contracts, while having accomplished significant progress on automation of workflows. | | | |

ICT

- **ICT-1 Eurosur Communication Network:** support, maintenance and further development of the Eurosur Communication Network.

- **ICT-2 Maintain the performance, availability and security of ICT services:** Ensuring ICT services availability.
- **ICT-4 New capabilities development:** develop the in-house capabilities related to business and technical analysis, enterprise and system architected and information and data management to retain knowledge, improve development of ICT Strategy and Governance. To supply the technical architecture document for the consolidation of ICT systems in order to supply common components, reduce the number of systems; reduce the overlapping of functionalities and maintenance costs. ANNEX 5 - Draft annual accounts and financial reports.
- **ICT-5 Technical, procurement and contracts coordination for the evolution of both operational and non-operational systems:** technical coordination of developments made in collaboration with other business units, coordination of the procurement procedures and requests in order to ensure the timely acquisition of licenses, the execution of support and the maintenance and development tasks for:
 - the bespoke operational systems, FOSS, FMM, Equipment of the Operations room, GIS solution, business intelligence environment;
 - digital asset management;
 - bespoke applications in the administrative area.
- **ICT-6 Intranet / My Frontex workspace:** further development of the My Frontex Workspace (intranet-based collaboration tools) and Record-Based Document Management System (RDBMS).
- **ICT-7 Implementation of ICT Business Continuity Capability:** continuation of implementation and operation of ICT business continuity capability (disaster recovery plan and infrastructure) including the installation, running, improvement, test and maintenance of the main ICT services in the disaster recovery site (DRS) and the installation of the business continuity site.
- **ICT-8 Implementation of Identity and Access Management:** implementation of a system allowing to centralise the management of accounts and the permissions of all ICT systems for the internal users as well as the external users and to use a single sign on for these applications, and the automation of the provisioning of accounts.
- **ICT-9 Adaptation of the network and service infrastructure on the additional floors to be used by Frontex:** floor adapted to the need of users, including cabling to the workstations, installation of Wi-Fi, connection of the floor distribution system to the datacentre, installation of multifunctional and video conference devices.
- **ICT-10 Development of Evolution of OPERA:** development of new pool resources management system, extending the functionalities of the current OPERA system, interoperable with the other operational systems of Frontex in order to implement and support the scope of the new Frontex regulation
- **ICT-11 IT Solution for vulnerability assessment:** development of the IT solution for the vulnerability assessment.
- **ICT-12 Maintain centralised document management system:** ensuring full functioning of centralised document management system.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------------|--|----|-----------|
| ICT-01 | System available according to commitment mentioned in SLA and SLS. | 7 | 2,250,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |

Tender for a framework contract for further development, maintenance and the support of Eurosur

The two-year end-to-end effort to secure a new framework contract for Eurosur successfully resulted in signing of a new EUR 12 million contract. It entered into force on 30 July 2018 and it might cover Frontex needs until 2022.

New version of Eurosur

After eight years of operation the user interface of the Eurosur Application was refurbished following the outcomes of the prior security analysis that recommended replacement of an obsolete software component no longer supported by its maker, Google. This required a major overhaul of the user interface and related parts of the Eurosur application which included the introduction of a dashboard feature, rationalisation and optimisation of the look and feel of the interface, improving its aesthetics and the user experience. This task was carried out in a continuous consultation with the volunteering MSs (NO, BG, GR).

The new interface has since served as a design pattern for other Frontex software developments such as Opera Evo and Vulnerability Assessment Platform Data Collection Module. The application was extended to widen the support to the browsers requested by MSs – in effect four most popular browsers for Linux and Windows can be used to access the application. In total, one major release and three minor and patch releases were deployed in 2018, further improving and solidifying the Eurosur application.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|--|----|-----------|
| ICT-02 | System available according to the commitment mentioned in SLA and SLS. | 13 | 3,605,000 |

Delivered results

ICT support performance statistics for 2018:

- Total number of service requests and incidents created in 2018: 27 441 (in comparison to 2017: 21 325, growth of 29%)
- Total number of incidents created in 2018: 3 471 (which is 13% of all registered requests)
- The average number of service requests and tickets created in 2018 daily: 125 (rounded)
- Total number of service requests and incidents completed in 2018: 27 306 (in comparison to 2017: 20 947, growth of 30%)
- Total number of incidents completed in 2018: 3 437 (which is 13% of all registered requests)
- The average number of service requests and tickets completed in 2018 daily: 124 (rounded)
- Percentage of service requests and incidents completed in 2018 within agreed SLAs and SLS: 90%
- Percentage of service requests and incidents completed in 2018 within agreed SLAs: 91%
- Percentage of service requests and incidents completed in 2018 within agreed SLS: 90%
- Total number of infrastructure changes created in 2018: 217 (in comparison to 2017: 149, growth of 46%)
- Total number of infrastructure changes completed in 2018: 141 (in comparison to 2017: 181, drop of 22%)
- User-related projects completed:
- Upgrade of the end users workstations operating system from Windows 7 to Windows 10: 93% office workstations completed.
- Replacement of the audio-video conferencing infrastructure components and the deployment of a new audio video terminals (12) in HQ and operational areas.
- Replacement (16 new multifunctional devices) and extension (14 additional multifunctional devices) of the printing fleet together with the implementation of a new print management solution.
- Extension of the EU-RESTRICTED network by implementing the end-points management solution (SCCM) together with an increase and replacement of the obsolete end-user equipment (100 new workstations).

- Migration of the users from the legacy EU-RESTRICTED network to the new one: 74% completed (91 out of 123).
- Extension of the audio-video projection infrastructure for the purposes of the MAS project (a new high-resolution wide displays)
- Implementing dual boot, UNCASSIFIED/EU-RESTRICTED workstation solution to limit the number of distributed workstations.
- Deployment of the IT infrastructure for Liaison Officers in remote offices in Sofia, Budapest, Stockholm and Bratislava.
- Support for the AFIC projects: proposal and assessment of the IT equipment purchased from grants as well as the support of the external AFIC training.
- Support of the internet connection for the Crime Information Cell (CIC) project on vessels.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|--|----|---------|
| ICT-04 | Enterprise and technical architecture documentation New IT Strategy New IT Technical architecture for the operational platform | 5 | 400,000 |

Delivered results

In the scope of Enterprise Architecture the following tasks were performed:

- Draft version of Business Case for Enterprise Architecture was prepared and initial feedback was collected from the business units.
- Dedicated questionnaire was created and the issues related to Enterprise Architecture were collected from the business units.
- Final version of Business Case for Enterprise Architecture was prepared based on the initial feedback and issues collected from the questionnaire.
- Now the final version of Business Case for Enterprise Architecture is waiting for verification and approval.
- General awareness about Enterprise Architecture was significantly increased through a number of presentations, clarification meetings and a dedicated article on the intranet (myFX HowTo).
- Common repository for Enterprise Architecture was established and is used for ongoing business analysis activities and projects.

The recruitment of an enterprise/solution architect is ongoing.

Interview with all FX stakeholders: all heads of departments, head of units and their key staff were conducted. A new ICT Strategy has been drafted – currently under the review of Senior Management before being spread to the other stakeholders.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|-------------|--|----|-----------|
| ICT-05 | Contract management in place, including escalation of incident and issues, on-time renewal of contracts, on-time launch of new procedures, permanent contractual coverage of the IT solutions, management of SLAs. | 10 | 1,600,000 |

Delivered results

Support of further development of FAR and FAR RSF

During 2018, the FAR Charters application has been maintained and further developed with 11 new releases covering 215 new requirements, including the development of a software interface in order to allow the Member States' return systems a direct connection with FAR Charters. Major improvements covered finance module, monitors pool, escort pool, passenger list overbooking and family cluster, a new role of Escort Leader.

The FAR RSF application has been maintained with over 200 tickets solved and further developed with 7 new releases covering 120 new requirements. Major improvements covered the interfaces with the travel agency's IT systems.

| | | | |
|---|--|-----|---------|
| Support of the further development of Sysper, ABnet, and Deployment tables. | | | |
| Delivery of AnTools Operational data Analysis tools were delivered in the end of 2018, aiming to consume data contained in all Eurosur layers (including JORA events) of the Frontex ECN node. The data are stored in a data warehouse system, can be processed with the integrated business intelligence, GIS and document analysis software. Reports produced through the system with regard to the Analysis tools web portal, can be scheduled, triggered and shared with selected Eurosur users, also in the Member States. . | | | |
| ICT-06 | Intranet/ myFrontex workspace modules delivered Improved collaboration, document and knowledge management | 1.5 | 800,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Further development of myFX, with the release of HowTo and Hydepark. New version of DMS/RMS system integrated with myFX; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> HowTo module of myFX; Contract management module; External expert DB; Data migration (from shared drives) for certain units; User training; Aggregation calendar; other web parts. | | | |
| ICT-07 | Capability available on the disaster recovery site for the basic systems such as authentication, email, file servers (as a first step), installation of the critical systems in preparation. | 1.5 | 625,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| All the infrastructure has been setup and tested in the second server room of the data centre and the tender procedure for the transportation to the mirror side is ongoing. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|---|-----|----------------------|
| ICT-08 | Integration of business applications in the identity and access management system according to the priorities fixed. | 1.5 | 110,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Having in mind recent and on-going constant growth of Frontex permanent and contracted staff resulting in accelerated increase in numbers of user accounts in ICT systems, Frontex has initiated a project aimed at creation of long-term vision and strategy in the area of identity and access management. In particular: (1) a draft version of business case for identity and access management has been prepared and discussed, (2) procurement process for assuring consulting services in support of vision and strategy for identity and access management has been launched. Additionally, data reconciliation and integration process for two main sources of identities in Frontex (i.e. active directory and HR systems) has been initialised. As a result of those activities Frontex's organisational structure has been reflected in active directory and is utilised to facilitate more efficient access management. | | | |
| ICT-09 | User able to use all the ICT solutions on the additional floors in the same building. | 0.5 | Budgeted in 2017 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| With the continuous increase of the staff, and taking into account removals within the Spire building and in Wronia building, all ICT solutions were provided appropriately. | | | |
| ICT-10 | Fast and less effort-intensive input of data from the MS, logistical and operational management of own and MS assets and personnel involved in Frontex coordinated operation. | 1 | Budgeted under PRU-2 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| At the end of the procurement procedure that took place in 2018, on the 18 Dec 2018 we have inked the framework contract for development of ICT software solution for the management of Frontex operational resources – OPERA system. This contract will provide us with four incremental releases of the new Opera System across two years. | | | |
| ICT-11 | Fast and less intensive input of data by the MS, tools to analyse the data and develop vulnerability reports | 2 | 350,000 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Delivery of data collection tool for vulnerability assessment In Dec 2018, we delivered a new vulnerability assessment data collection module which has been installed in the EUROSUR nodes at all Members States and Schengen associated countries. This solution provides each country with a central point to provide answers to the baseline assessment questionnaire at the EU restricted level. | | | |
| ICT-12 | Ensuring full functioning of centralised document management system | 2 | |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Some DMS functionalities are operational. | | | |

Inspection and Control

- **ICO-1 Enhances corporate planning, evaluation and control function:** internal evaluations (*ex ante*, interim, and *ex post*) are mandated and coordinated by a central entity, involving internal and external experts.
- **ICO-2 Business Continuity Management in Frontex:** maintain and adjust Business Continuity Management (BCM) across Frontex; effectively respond to threats; BCM protects main business interests of Frontex according to the adopted strategy.
- **ICO-3 Process improvement:** improve processes enabling process/activity-oriented management.
- **ICO-4 Strengthening Frontex anti-fraud controls:** In line with OLAF's recommendations for all EU Agencies and the European Commission guidelines the controls over potential fraud will be strengthened.
- **ICO-5 Internal Control Framework:** Define and implement measures supporting the elements of the adopted Internal Control Framework.

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|---|---|------|----|
| ICO-01 | Limited number of evaluations executed (FWC) leading to improvements in the evaluated areas. <i>Ex post</i> controls executed. | 1.25 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Three <i>ex post</i> controls executed in Greece; Spain and Italy. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| ICO-02 | Three business continuity exercises conducted | 0 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Revision of the established business continuity processes in desk review including establishment of business continuity coordination function; business continuity integrated into disaster recovery process. | | | |

| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
|--|--|------|----|
| ICO-03 | Business processes were refined and approved. | 0.5 | |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Business processes are partly approved by the responsible business owners (Directors of Divisions). In light of the changes to the internal structure and the rules of procedure, the identification 'of to-be-modified processes' launched. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| ICO-04 | Strengthening Frontex anti-fraud controls. | 1.25 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| Anti-Fraud strategy and action plan for 2019–2021 prepared and adopted by the MB. | | | |
| Activity ID | Expected results | HR | FR |
| ICO-05 | Controls established and executed at different levels. | 1.5 | 0 |
| Delivered results | | | |
| New internal control framework implemented. | | | |

ANNEX 5 – Draft annual accounts and financial reports

According to Art 98 (1) Frontex's Financial Regulation (FFR) the accounting officer of the Agency shall send the provisional accounts to the accounting officer of the European Commission and to the Court of Auditors by 1 March of the following year.

By 1st of June of the following year at the latest, the Court of Auditors shall make its observations on the provisional account of the Agency (Art 99(1) FFR). On receiving the Court of Auditors' observations on the provisional accounts of the Agency, the Accounting Officer shall draw up the final accounts of the Agency. The Executive Director shall send them to the Management Board, which shall give an opinion on these accounts (Art 99(2) FFR).

The accounting officer shall send the final accounts, together with the opinion of the Management Board to the accounting officer of the European Commission, the Court of Auditors, the European Parliament and the Council by 1 July of the following financial year.

The provisional accounts and a reporting package have been sent to the accounting officer of the European Commission and the Court of Auditors on 01 March 2019.

As the Court of Auditors has not issued its observations on the provisional accounts the attached overviews (balance sheet, statement of financial performance and cash flow statement) are in a draft (provisional) status.

The annual accounts are drawn up in accordance with the Frontex's Financial Regulation. The annual accounts of Frontex include the financial statements and the report on the implementation of the budget. The report contains more detailed information regarding the elements of the financial statements (see column 'Note').

The objectives of the financial statements are to provide information about the financial position, performance and cash flows of Frontex.

The financial statements have been prepared according to the accounting rules adopted by the European Commission's accountant, following the principles of accrual based accountancy where the economic outturn, balance sheet and cash flow are concerned. It should be noted that under Frontex's Financial Regulation, the accounts consist of the general accounts and the budget accounts, both kept in Euro.

The general accounts are accrual accounts which mean that the effects of transactions and other events are recognised when those transactions or events occur (and not only when cash or its equivalent is received or paid). The general accounts allow for the preparation of the financial statements, presenting all revenues and expenses, assets and liabilities for the financial year and are designed to establish the financial position at the end of the reported year and the financial performance of the year.

The budget execution is prepared on the basis of a modified cash accounting. In cash accounting system, payments executed and revenue received are recorded. Modified cash accounting, used for generating the budgetary accounts, adds a new position in the expenditure side represented by the payment appropriations carried over to the following year.

The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the period.

The final annual accounts will be published on Frontex's website:

<https://frontex.europa.eu/about-frontex/key-documents/>

Balance sheet

| STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION | Reporting year 2018 (1) | Previous year 2017 (2) | Delta (1)-(2) |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|
| I. ASSETS | 141,373,231.23 | 142,546,639.46 | -1,173,408.23 |
| A. NON-CURRENT ASSETS | 9,531,330.00 | 7,334,402.00 | 2,196,928.00 |
| A1. Intangible fixed assets | 791,423.00 | 1,853,306.00 | -1,061,883.00 |
| A2. Tangible fixed assets | 8,739,907.00 | 5,481,096.00 | 3,258,811.00 |
| B. CURRENT ASSETS | 131,841,901.23 | 135,212,237.46 | -3,370,336.23 |
| B1. Receivables | 116,182,672.07 | 120,338,408.73 | -4,155,736.66 |
| B2. Pre-finance | 13,352,785.21 | 10,620,740.59 | 2,732,044.62 |
| B3. Cash & cash equivalents | 22,906.96 | 46,456.42 | -23,549.46 |
| B4. Other | 2,283,536.99 | 4,206,631.72 | -1,923,094.73 |
| II. Liabilities | 141,373,231.23 | 142,546,639.46 | -1,173,408.23 |
| C. CURRENT LIABILITIES | 89,771,762.85 | 93,877,893.00 | -4,106,130.15 |
| C1. Accounts payable | 43,948,042.47 | 53,195,028.87 | -9,246,986.40 |
| C3. Accrued charges | 45,823,720.38 | 40,682,864.13 | 5,140,856.25 |
| D. NET ASSETS | 51,601,468.38 | 48,668,746.46 | 2,932,721.92 |
| D1. Accumulated surplus (+)/deficit (-) | 51,601,468.38 | 48,668,746.46 | 2,932,721.92 |

Statement of financial performance

| STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE | Reporting year 2018 (1) | Previous year 2017 (2) | Delta (1)-(2) |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| A. REVENUE | 289,122,896.91 | 271,434,816.00 | 17,688,080.91 |
| A1. Operating | 288,624,191.40 | 270,818,247.03 | 17,805,944.37 |
| 1. EU contribution | 266,567,746.51 | 248,448,863.47 | 18,118,883.04 |
| 2. Other contributions | 20,955,000.00 | 18,501,000.00 | 2,454,000.00 |
| 3. Other revenue from consolidated entities | 408,541.42 | 1,164,995.72 | -756,454.30 |
| 4. Revenue from fixed assets | -399,484.44 | 54,368.00 | -453,852.44 |
| 5. Other revenues | 1,092,387.91 | 2,649,019.84 | -1,556,631.93 |
| A2. Financial | 498,705.51 | 616,568.97 | -117,863.46 |
| 1. Exchange rate gains | 498,548.06 | 615,393.32 | -116,845.26 |
| 2. Interests | 157.45 | 1,175.65 | -1,018.20 |
| B. EXPENSES | -286,190,174.99 | -258,118,611.27 | -28,071,563.72 |
| B1. Staff and related | -31,274,153.77 | -25,245,539.78 | -6,028,613.99 |
| 1. Staff | -23,023,333.96 | -18,226,099.97 | -4,797,233.99 |
| 2. Allowances | -7,163,167.68 | -5,845,312.12 | -1,317,855.56 |
| 3. Social contributions | -953,341.81 | -752,484.50 | -200,857.31 |
| 4. Others | -134,310.32 | -421,643.19 | 287,332.87 |
| B2. Administrative | -29,924,507.24 | -19,561,521.21 | -10,362,986.03 |
| 1. Building and associates | -12,578,409.99 | -8,292,024.59 | -4,286,385.40 |
| 2. Office supply & maintenance | -1,664,215.85 | -1,040,439.31 | -623,776.54 |
| 3. Communication & publication | -998,657.80 | -778,596.39 | -220,061.41 |
| 4. Experts | -8,950,538.39 | -5,851,227.33 | -3,099,311.06 |
| 5. IT costs R&D | -3,848,199.08 | -1,326,086.51 | -2,522,112.57 |
| 6. Other | -1,884,486.13 | -2,273,147.08 | 388,660.95 |
| B3. Operational | -212,303,946.63 | -199,845,026.75 | -12,458,919.88 |
| 1. Operational costs | -207,004,424.15 | -195,084,026.36 | -11,920,397.79 |
| 2. IT costs | -5,299,522.48 | -4,761,000.39 | -538,522.09 |
| B4. Consolidated entities | -11,992,305.53 | -12,685,116.80 | 692,811.27 |
| 1. Consolidated entities | -11,992,305.53 | -12,685,116.80 | 692,811.27 |
| B5. Financial | -695,261.82 | -781,406.73 | 86,144.91 |
| 1. Exchange rate loss | -694,136.04 | -775,686.07 | 81,550.03 |
| 2. Interests | -965.72 | -5,300.85 | 4,335.13 |
| 3. Other | -160.06 | -419.81 | 259.75 |
| Economic result | 2,932,721.92 | 13,316,204.73 | -10,383,482.81 |

Cash flow

| Cash flow (indirect method) | Reporting year 2018 | Previous year 2017 |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------|
| Surplus/(deficit) of the year | 2.932.721,92 | 13.316.204,73 |
| Operating activities | | |
| Amortisation (intangible fixed assets) | 1.190.078,14 | 1.317.566,92 |
| Depreciation (tangible fixed assets) | 2.231.570,61 | 1.061.765,09 |
| Increase/(decrease) in provisions for risks and liabilities | 0,00 | -66.864,44 |
| (Increase)/decrease in short-term pre-financing | -2.732.044,62 | 244.321,05 |
| (Increase)/decrease in long-term receivables | 0,00 | 0,00 |
| (Increase)/decrease in short-term receivables | 6.078.831,39 | -27.698.787,80 |
| Increase/(decrease) in accounts payable | -4.106.130,15 | 15.315.221,22 |
| Net cash flow from operating activities | 5.595.027,29 | 3.489.426,77 |
| Investing activities | | |
| Purchase less disposal of tangible and intangible fixed assets (-) | -5,618,576.75 | -3.461.132,01 |
| Net cash flow from investing activities | -5.618.576,75 | -3.461.132,01 |
| Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents | -23,549.46 | 28.294,76 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period | 46.456,42 | 18.161,66 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period | 22.906,96 | 46.456,42 |