ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL POLICE DATA EXCHANGE IN SUPRESSION OF ILLEGAL MIGRATIONS ON SOUTH –EASTERN ROUTE

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Annotation. In the period from 2014 to 2016, the number of illegal migrants arriving to Europe has exponentially increased. The South-Eastern route has been used to a significant extent since the beginning of the 21st century for entering the EU, but its use has been continuously increasing since 2008. All countries on the so-called Balkan route have experienced a sharp increase of 1612% in illegal migrant arrivals in comparison with the previous year. Organised crime groups have adapted their activities in accordance with the new trends. This article analyses the scope of international police data exchange in suppression of illegal migration, the role of international police organisations in the suppression of illegal migrations and people smuggling. Furthermore, the article shows specific routes in people smuggling across the Croatian borders, providing an overview of police activity based on concrete operative cases and efforts made by Croatia in the context of joining the Schengen Area. Finally, the article shows some global trends in the field of illegal migration and people smuggling and gives possible future scenarios on the South-Eastern route.

Keywords: Data exchange, illegal Migration, people smuggling, South- Easter Route, police cooperation, Interpol, Europol.

INTRODUCTION

Global instability close to EU borders caused by wars in the Near East region, poverty and political instability in Africa and bad social conditions in the most populated countries of the world reached their peak especially since 2014. South-Eastern Europe is always one of the first regions affected by such global trends. These trends are not only significant for the EU but also for the rest of the world living in better social conditions[1]. Migrant smuggling emerged in the recent period and tends to be the most profitable and widespread criminal activity in the EU. Trafficking in human beings tends to increase and its expansion is expected to continue[2]. What was the response of the law enforcement authorities in the past to these trends and what

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[1] Cases of Iraq nationals traveling via Iceland toward Canada and the USA by airplanes.
[2] Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment, Europol, 2017.

will be the response to such trends in the future? It is very illustrative to analyse criminal investigations done in 2012 and compare the data with illegal migration global trends that affected Croatia from September 2015 when the so called Balkan route was activated.

In 2012, smuggled people arrived from the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia. In 2015 this trend seemed to change: all illegal migrants predominantly arrived from Serbia, and in very few cases from Bosnia and Herzegovina. The southern route via Albania and Montenegro towards Croatia has not been activated: even if migrants reach the southern territory of Croatia, they still need to pass Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to reach the rest of the Croatian territory. More borders – more control, and subsequently, more expenses. In addition, unlike Hungary, Croatia was not affected by illegal migrations until September 2015 because it still is not part of the Schengen zone. This means that, even if the migrants reached Croatia, they would still need to enter the Schengen Area of free movement of people. This means additional expenses and risk of disclosure especially after the introduction of systematic checks at the EU borders3.

The aim of the article is to present illegal migration situation before the global crises in 2015 on the Southe Eastern route. **Methodology of the Research.** Concrete criminal investigation from 2011/2012 is compared with the new trends after 2015/2016. Everything is comapred with the strategic documents of Interpol and Europol on migration trends as well as with the national predictions on the migrants situation.

Text of a introduction

To put things into perspective, it needs to be said that Croatia has one of the longest EU borders: 325 km with Serbia (major part of the border is the wide Danube river), 1001 km with Bosnia and Herzegovina, 51 km with Montenegro, 948 km external border on the sea and internal EU borders with Slovenia on the west and Hungary on the East. In sum, this accounts for 2325 km EU external border (together with 948 km on the sea) and 1014 km EU external border.

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3 Directive (EU) 2017/541 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2017 on combating terrorism and replacing Council Framework Decision 2002/475/JHA and amending Council Decision 2005/671/JHA, OJ 2017 L 88 of 2017-03-30, p. 6-21

PEOPLE SMUGGLING IN CROATIA – CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION IN 2012

It is important to stress that in 2011 Croatia was not an EU member state, while Slovenia joined the Schengen Area in 2008, three years before. Croatia reached a peak of illegal migrations after the Homeland war 1991-1995[4], in 2000 when there were more than 24 000 illegal migrants registered[5]. After the initial detection of this fact, special investigation measures were approved by judicial authorities and implemented against 21 persons. One smuggling route identified was by airplane from Istanbul (Turkey) to Belgrade, Sarajevo or Zagreb. All people smuggled had invitation letters signed by Turkish nationals or different Turkish language and culture centres in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These people also used border crossings between Serbia and Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia and Montenegro and Croatia in order to legally cross the border by car. Another smuggling group from Bosnia and Herzegovina that did not obtain legal documents in advance, illegally crossed the border in the zone of the town of Bihac (Western part of Bosnia and Herzegovina) and after entering Croatia, reached previously booked accommodations in different motels and hotels in Zagreb. After several days, people were smuggled towards Slovenia (in the zone some 40 km away from Zagreb). During the criminal investigation, it was detected that the criminals kept in touch *via* direct contacts, phones, internet and skype calls. They frequently used public payphones, they were very careful, took care of every detail. They used regular bus and train lines, personal vehicles, vans and taxies. Payment was done in cash in person or via Western Union. Crossing the border illegally was supported by the locals. It was performed by using personal vehicles or on foot.
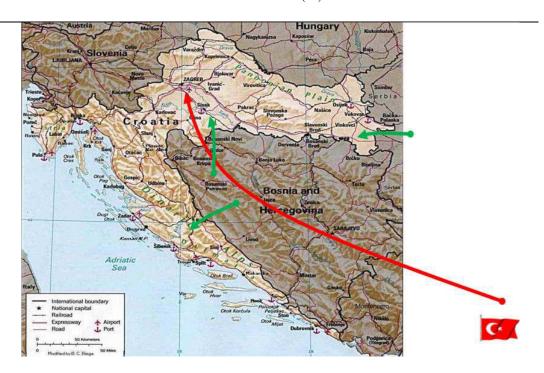
Prices for smuggled persons differed, depending on the number of people smuggled. For example, prices per person were the following: relation Belgrade (Serbia) - Zagreb cost 700-1000 euros[6], Bihac (Bosnia and Herzegovina) - Zagreb 270-400 euros[7], Bihac - Zagreb - Udinese (Italy) was 1200-1600 euros and Bihac – Zagreb - Graz (Austria) was 1200-1700 euros.

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[4] During the Homeland war in Croatia, war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, later in Kosovo, the whole region was politically and militarily unsafe. Although some criminal groups kept their connections, the region was not exposed to illegal migration due to security reasons and the fact that some regular train and bus lines were abolished until the end of the 90s.

[5] This was predominantly caused by the „soft „ visa regime introduced by some neighbouring countries. Immediately after detecting this problem, Croatia concluded international agreements on readmission with all countries in South–Eastern Europe in order to prevent such phenomena.

[6] Approx. 400 kilometers, one border crossing, highway, could be reached in 4 hours.

[7] Approx. 120 kilometers, one border crossing, could be reached in 2 hours.

Picture 1. Smuggling routes

Partial payment was done by organisers from Turkey when the smuggled people reached Bosnia and Herzegovina, the rest was paid after notifying the arrival of smuggled people to their destination countries. The criminal organisation was structured and hierarchical – top structures were held by organisers from Turkey, followed by Bosnian, Croatian and Slovenian citizens. It is estimated that this criminal organisation organised 27 instances of smuggling in which 100 persons were smuggled across borders, and they gained 1.5 million kunas worth of illegal property[8]. At the final stage of the criminal investigation in July 2012, started simultaneously coordinated criminal activity in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Slovenia. 18 persons were arrested, 16 searches of apartments and houses were performed. 32 mobile phones with SIM cards were detected, as well as 4 Turkish passports, 2 passports of Bosnia and Herzegovina, some arms with ammunition, laptops, Western Union sheets and some drugs. 21 persons were criminally reported for committing 30 criminal acts connected to people smuggling.

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[8] Approx. 200 000 Euros.

SITUATION IN THE EU BEFORE THE ILLEGAL MIGRATION CRISES IN 2015 VIA SOUTH EASTERN ROUTE

The crime situation and trends in Croatia during 2014[9] called for conducting a number of activities in relation, *inter alia,* to suppressing criminal offences of smuggling of persons and trafficking in human beings. In 2014, **140 criminal offences of unlawful entry, movement or residence in the Republic of Croatia** were detected and reported (the former name of the criminal offence was illegal transfer of persons across the state border - art. 177 of the Penal Code) as stated in art. 326 of the Penal Code which, compared to 176 criminal offences in 2013, represents a decrease in the detection of the mentioned criminal offences by 20.45%. A decrease in the number of persons registered in illegal crossing of the state border by 17.3% was recorded. In other words, 3 914 persons were registered during 2014, while 4 734 persons were registered during 2013. In 2014, 15 persons were reported for **8 criminal offences of trafficking in human beings**, while in 2013, 18 persons were reported for 13 criminal offences of trafficking in human beings. The apparent decrease in detection of criminal offences of trafficking in human beings in 2014 is misleading, since in 2014 the number of identified victims of trafficking in human beings was 37, in comparison with the previous year when 31 victims of trafficking in human beings were identified, which is actually an increase of 16.22%. The abovementioned is based on the fact that the victims of trafficking in human beings were identified by detecting criminal offences of prostitution as stated in art. 157 of the Criminal Code, exploitation of children for pornography as stated in art. 163 of the Penal Code, rape as stated in art. 153 of the Criminal Code and others (in total, 54 criminal offences committed to the detriment of victims of trafficking in human beings were registered). These figures from 2014 seemed to be "unrealistic" compared to the same figures on crime trends in 2015/2016[10]. A total of 156 criminal offences of 'Illegal entry, movement and stay in the Republic of Croatia, any other Member State or a signatory to the Schengen Agreement' were detected and 167 persons were reported for them in 2016 pursuant to the Croatian Criminal Code Art. 326. In 2015, 68 such cases were detected and 73 persons were reported, which yields a 129.40 % increase in the detection of this crime. A 19.6% increase in the number of persons recorded

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[9] Country Report – the state of Crime and Crime Trends in 2014 in Croatia, published by Criminal Police Directorate, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Croatia, February 2015.
[10] Country Report – the state of Crime and Crime Trends in 2016 in Croatia, published by Criminal Police Directorate, Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Croatia, March 2017.

illegally crossing the state border was noted – from 3,759 in 2015 to 4,496 persons in 2016[11]. In 2016 seven criminal offences were detected and reported referring to **trafficking in human beings (THB)** against 10 persons, compared to three such crimes involving six perpetrators reported in 2015. In 2016, thirty THB victims were identified, which is a 21.5 % drop from 38 victims identified in 2015. These THB victims were identified by way of related criminal offences listed in the Croatian Criminal Code, such as 'Prostitution' (Art. 157), 'Abuse of children in pornography' (Art. 163), 'Rape' (Art. 153) etc. (32 criminal offences were recorded to have been committed against THB victims).

Compared to 2014, the number of illegal migrants that entered the EU illegally by sea and land using the Western Balkans route increased by 3 492 % in 2015, reaching the figure of 1 336 010 irregular migrants and other people trying to cross the EU border[12].

What were the reasons for such an increase? Some reasons are well known and described in various open sources[13] and could be summed up as eight main reasons for the refugee crisis. The most important is the war in Syria that caused migration not only from Syria, but also from Iraq, Afghanistan, Eritrea, Somalia and Niger. Secondly, the route to Europe got a lot easier especially after Macedonia lifted its severe measures aimed at preventing refugees from entering the country in June and the Western Balkans route was opened up. Thirdly, prices for illegal crossing the border dropped from 5-6 000 USD to 2-3 000 USD per person. The fourth reason has to do with the weather conditions starting from the second quarter of 2015, which were extremely good for illegally crossing both the sea and land borders. The fifth reason is Germany's decision to extend its welcome to refugees. The sixth reason is the conscription drive of the Syrian government to enlist reservists to serve the army. It affected all men who completed compulsory military service in the past 10 years, which means practically all men under 30 years. The seventh reason is the fact that the Syrian Government made it easier for Syrians to travel – travel documents were easier to obtain and it was possible to defer military

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[11] These figures could not be mixed with figures on migrants who illegally crossed the border within the migration route. These migrants were accepted in reception centres, recorded and further transferred due to the fact that they did not want to stay in Croatia.
[12] Frontex, Annual Risk Analyses, http://frontex.europa.eu/assets/Publications/Risk_Analysis/WB_Q4_2015.pdf (accessed on March 25, 2017)
[13] The Washington Post, 8 reasons Europe's refugee crisis is happening now, author Liz Sly, article published on September 18 2015, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2015/09/18/8-reasons-why-europes-refugee-crisis-is-happening-now/?utm_term=.7eff0bffb977, website accessed on March 26, 2017.

service with a payment of 300 USD. Last but not least are the shortcomings of the underfunded international aid efforts[14].

REACTION OF THE EU TO THE MIGRATION CRISIS

The EU was quite confused with the migration trends in 2015 – it took a while for a proper reaction. Its reaction to the crisis could be described as having two aspects – the humanitarian and security one[15]. On May 13, the European Commission published A European Agenda on Migrations[16]. The Agenda was adopted just before the reopening of the Western Balkans route, which was soon to become more affected than the central Mediterranean route and this is mentioned in the Agenda in the following sentence: "Close attention will also be paid to our eastern partners, the Western Balkans and Asia fostering existing cooperation frameworks." The Agenda describes the necessity for all countries to build up "sound and consistent external borders" and mentions Internal Security Funds and IT systems. This was a time when very few EU countries really and honestly accepted the idea of "Smart Border packages", the introduction of interoperability in all IT systems and the installation of new systems for a proper protection of the EU borders. Nobody in the EU thought Brexit was a serious probability and it happened several months later.

The first reaction was focused on four pillars: 1) reducing the incentives for irregular migration, 2) border management – saving lives and securing external borders, 3) Europe's duty to protect a strong common asylum policy and 4) a new policy on legal migration. The first pillar promotes the fight against smugglers and traffickers, emphasizing it as „...first and foremost a way to prevent the exploitation of migrants by criminal networks". It also mentions the importance of cooperation with third countries since most smugglers are not based in Europe. EU agencies are also mentioned for their role "...in intensifying their (EU member states') action against criminal networks of smugglers. Agencies help identify smugglers, investigate them, prosecute them, freeze and confiscate their assets. " The agenda also stipulates proactive financial investigations, aiming at seizures and recovery of criminal assets, and

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[14] For a better explanation see also: Frcko, M., Solomun, D.: Internal Security of the EU in the modern conditions of the migration crisis, Police Academy, 2016, p. 13-14 (in Croatian).
[15] All published documents available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package_en (website accessed on April 13, 2017)
[16]   http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52015DC0240&from=EN   (website accessed on April 13, 2017).

actions against money laundering connected to migrant smuggling and the necessity to give much bigger power to prosecutors to address smuggling networks.

From the law enforcement perspective the second pillar is also important, since it describes the border management situation mentioning only the Mediterranean zone – the reinforcement of Frontex, the identification of risk trends and help mechanism for EU and non-EU countries.

What was done by national and international law enforcement agencies before 2015 and the massive migration wave? Interpol as the biggest global police organisation established the Specialist Operational Network (ISON) on People Smuggling, an international law enforcement working group headed by the People Smuggling team at the Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Directorate. The working group is made of experts from source, transit and destination countries with different profiles: people smuggling investigators, immigration services, specialised asylum seeker officers, as well as border and custom officers. The main tasks performed by the working group were cross checks against Interpol databases, language assistance (English, Spanish, French and Arabic), production of analytical reports based on information and dissemination of information to specialised law enforcement people smuggling teams in Interpol Headquarters with the purpose of increasing data sharing, of promoting publications of notices and diffusions, of assisting countries in investigation requests, of producing reports on actual investigations and periodical measurements of statistics on information sharing and the use of Interpol tools and services. It is clear that Interpol strives to use already existing tools – the I24/7 system and automatic search facilities integrated: Stolen and lost travel document[17], wanted/missing persons and stolen vehicles. A huge advantage of Interpol is that it has its instruments out of the EU available and enables translation, especially for Arabic language.

It also enables quicker communication and data exchange with the countries of origin. Simply put, Interpol connects 192 countries. It exchanges more than 19 million messages a year and has more than 23 000 users. There are 7.5 million searches via Interpol tools every day, 48 arrests are made, almost 400 stolen/lost travel documents are found, 64.9 million data are recorded, and 2.8 billion searches with 355 783 hits and 17 328 new notices are issued[18].

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[17] Croatia has integrated the FIND solution for checks of Interpol data into the national police system and border-check system. In 2015, more than 10 million checks were made.
[18] Interpol – Specialist operational Network on People Smuggling (ISON) – activities, plans, education, training. Interpol official data for 2015.

What has been done by Europol? On 22 February 2016, the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) was established with the aim of strengthening capacities to support Member States in improving prevention and fight against migrant smuggling. EMSC focused on trends in migrant smuggling, facilitation methodology and facilitators/organised crime.

Picture 2 – Interpol I24/7 instruments

Legal background is well defined as one of EMPACT[19] priorities on the "facilitation of illegal immigration" and within the already mentioned Agenda on Migration.

As already mentioned, Organised Crime Groups (OCG) provide facilitation services for irregular migrants. Perpetrators could be leaders, organisers and facilitators. Facilitators are responsible for logistics like transport, accommodation etc. Smugglers offer accommodation, fraudulent documents and information. They widely use the social media[20].

It is significant that the EMSC received 11 942 messages via Europol's secure communication network in 2016, an increase of almost one third compared with the same data in 2015. These messages contained data of over 17 400 migrant smuggling suspects and enabled opening 2 000 cases with more than 490 investigations[21]. Around 500 vessels of interest were monitored, 2 589 forged identity or travel documents reported. Furthermore, the development

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[19] EMPACT: European Multidisciplinary Platform Against Criminal Threats (part of the EU policy cycle on serious and organised crime).
[20] European Migrant Smuggling Centre, Jan 2016-Jan 2017 First Year Activity Report, Europol, 2017, p. 10-13.
[21] Ibid 20, p. 13.

of targeted cross-border criminal investigations with the aim on disrupting migrant smuggling networks will remain EMSC's top priority.

Interpol and Europol are fully aware of the fact that the precondition for combating smuggling of people and illegal migration is further coordination and strengthening.

Joint Interpol-Europol Report on Migrant Smuggling Networks[22] published in May 2016 presented the concrete consequences of smuggling: over 11 500 contributions on migrant smuggling provided to Europol in 2015, intelligence on nearly 40 000 suspects, over 1500 criminal investigations supported by Europol, social media analyses from Europol's Internet Referral Unit, 1 500 debriefings of migrants collected by Frontex and EU Member states, reports from partner agencies (Frontex, UN, EASO), intelligence on more than 100 suspicious vessels etc. Let us consider the collected data: in 2015, a total of 7 164 instances of illegal border crossing via the Western Mediterranean route were reported, a total of 153 946 illegal entries were detected via the Central Mediterranean route and 885 385 entries via the South Eastern Route in 2015 were recorded – an increase of 1 612% in 2015 compared to previous year[23]!!

Just for the sake of comparison, an average of 50 000 illegal entries per year had been recorded via this route since 2008. The dramatic wave stopped a bit in November 2015 when the Governments of Macedonia and Serbia put into force restrictions which allowed entry only to migrants originating from Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. Croatia and Slovenia allowed entry only from "unsafe" countries. The reopening of the South-Eastern route reopened also some criminal hotspots, predominantly in Turkey and Lebanon, but also in Sudan and the border areas between Turkey, Iraq and Iran.

Transport hubs for migrant smuggling inside the EU are very interesting, and are regularly close to main transport routes. These smuggling hubs often include large cities inside and outside the EU, cities on the migratory route and cities close to detention centres where migrants are housed. The composition of the criminal networks in the EU indicates that almost half of organised criminal groups are made up of non-EU nationals, but also that almost one third is made up of EU nationals. In the majority of cases, the main organisers are non-EU nationals of the same origin as the migrants. At the beginning of the migration crisis, the networks were mostly homogenously organised along tight ethnic lines. By monitoring phone communication,

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[22] Migrant Smuggling Networks – Joint Europol- Interpol Report- Executive Summary – May 2016
[23] Frontex (2015) Bi-Weekly Focus on the migratory pressure in the Western Balkans originally emanating from the Near East.

ISSN 2029-1701   Mokslinių straipsnių rinkinys
ISSN 2335-2035 (Online)   VISUOMENĖS SAUGUMAS IR VIEŠOJI TVARKA
PUBLIC SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER
2017 (18)   Scientific articles

it was concluded that some ethnical groups arranged their entire itinerary from the destination countries, while other groups were active during the whole transit. They did not plan their entire route before travelling.

Smuggling starts through "recruitments" initiated by special agents who are not smugglers but normally get a commission from actual smugglers for their work. After this initial activity, the chain of perpetrators involves providers of documents, local leaders, network leaders, sometimes corrupt officials, money handlers and eventually somebody responsible for the money laundering of the illegal gain (hotels, car rental, travel agencies etc.). Migrants are usually given instructions, and rely a lot on social media in receiving instructions.

Let us compare the prices with the prices from the beginning of our article. According to the results of criminal investigations in 2012, migrants paid an average of EUR 3000-6000 for the whole transfer from Syria to the EU. This is a much lower price than the cost of transfer from Belgrade to Zagreb in 2012 criminal investigation previously described. Besides, Belgrade – Zagreb was only part of the journey. On the other hand, if we take into consideration that approximately 1 million people entered the EU in 2015, it is an average turnover of EUR 5-5.5 billion.

What is specific for Croatia? Once the migration wave started in September 2015, Croatia was not connected to SIS II and did not have any possibility to check persons via the SIS II system. On the other hand, there were days when 13 000 migrants crossed the Croatian border, and the Croatian police faced challenges in regulating this migration flow. On the one hand, it was a challenge to register all data, and on the other hand they were not able to cross-check any other available international search data except the Interpol data. Unlike its EU neighbours, Croatia was not able to profit from EU funds. Since its accession, Croatia profited only from the Schengen facility funds, and they were used for the process of preparing and equipping Croatia's capacities for joining the Schengen area, especially having in mind that Croatia needs to protect one of the longest EU borders – sea, land and air[24].

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[24] Croatia is among top three EU tourist destinations: the Croatian Civil Aviation Agency predicts that by 2018 the number of air passengers will increase by some 25 percent reaching almost 10 million. There are 9 international airports in Croatia. Unlike many other countries with fewer air passengers, Croatia was not able to use EU ISEC funds for setting up the PIU Unit on Passenger Name Records, due to the fact that Croatia joined the EU on July 1, 2013.

CONCLUSION

Migrant smuggling is currently "a daily business" in the EU. Organised crime groups show high mobility, they are more sophisticated and flexible. It is a low risk criminal activity, highly profitable and it does not require any access to specific resources. Many organised crime groups are poly-criminal, dealing with drug trafficking, property crime, forgery of documents etc. The law enforcement authorities deal not only with the activity of smuggling people from the East to the West, but also with multiple flows of victims all over the EU. Trafficking in human beings is closely linked to illegal migrations and the *modus operandi* is quite similar, involving document and identity fraud, corruption of consular officials, sham marriages, bogus paternity, false employment contracts, false medical visas etc. The EU has to count on an increased number of such cases.

The first core activity in dealing with these challenges is data exchange: this is already arranged through Single Points of Contact which should have an access to as many as possible police (and judicial) databases in order to exchange available information smoothly and in real time. Channels used include Interpol I24/7, Europol SIENA, domestic and foreign security liaison officers, PCCC[25] already installed within the EU but also outside the EU with third countries. The implementation of Prüm decisions[26] should be enhanced through improved analytical reports from Europol Workfiles.

Another step is achieving interoperability of different databases for law enforcement purposes that is foreseen to be done soon: SIS II system and Visa Information System, EURODAC system and European Criminal Record Information Systems and Entry / Exit system (EES) and the Visa Information System where data in VIS will be consulted by the EES. It is also important to reach good quality data from the European travel information and authorisation system (ETIAS) and Passenger Name Record (PNR). IT solutions that should be "ready for use" by 2020 are now developing fast but there are always weak points in the security chain – forged documents, bribed official and so on.

There are also external risk factors. Brexit and its consequences for global security, situation in the Near East, Central and Northern Africa where there still exist several million people searching for a better future and a "ticket" to escape from poverty and political instability.

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[25] Police and Customs Cooperation Centres.
[26] Council Decisions 2008/615/JHA and 2008/616/JHA.

Checks on external EU or Schengen border will never by sufficient. To achieve the final goal it is necessary to cope with the origins of poverty and the facilitators of organised crime who will always show readiness to cooperate with whomever necessary with one single aim: to reach financial gain that will be later reinvested into legitimate business.

Finally, it is necessary to improve cooperation with third countries by having as concrete as possible operative information from the spot.

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TARPTAUTINIO POLICIJOS PASIKEITIMO INFORMACIJA VAIDMUO KOVOJANT SU NELEGALIA MIGRACIJA PIETRYČIŲ MARŠRUTE
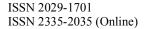
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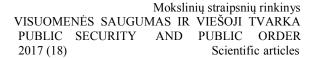
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S a n t r a u k a

Nelegalių migrantų, atvykstančių į Europą, skaičius išaugo daug kartų nuo 2014 metų. Pietrytiniu migracijos maršrutu naudojamasi dar nuo XXI a. pradžios, siekiant patekti į EU, tačiau besinaudojančiųjų šiuo maršrutu asmenų skaičius auga nuo 2008 metų. Visos taip vadinamojo Balkanų maršruto valstybės patyrė didžiulį 1612 proc. augimą atvykstančių nelegalių migrantų atžvilgiu, palyginus su ankstesniais metais. Organizuotos nusikaltėlių grupės pritaikė savo veiklą pagal naujas sąlygas. Šiame straipsnyje analizuojama, kiek keičiamasi tarptautiniu mastu policijos informacija, siekiant sustabdyti nelegalią migraciją, taip pat analizuojamas tarptautinių policijos organizacijų vaidmuo (Interpolas, Euopolas, Frontex) stabdant nelegalią migraciją ir kovojant su migrantų kontrabanda. Taip pat straipsnyje nurodomi konkretūs žmonių kontrabandos maršrutai, besidriekiantys per Kroatijos sieną, ir apibūdinama policijos veikla konkrečiais atvejais, taip pat apibrėžiamos Kroatijos

pastangos siekiant prisijungti prie Šengeno erdvės. Galiausiai straipsnyje nurodomi tam tikros globalios tendencijos nelegalios migracijos bei migrantų kontrabandos srityje ir pateikiami galimi Pietryčių maršruto ateities scenarijai.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: pasikeitimas informacija policijoje, nelegali migracija, asmenų kontrabanda, Pietryčių maršrutas, policijos bendradarbavimas, policijos bendradarbiavimas, Interpolas, Europolas.

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