

Western Balkans

Annual Risk Analysis 2013





Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis 2013



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List of abbreviations used

ARA	Annual Risk Analysis
BCP	border-crossing point
BiH	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CIRAM	Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model
EDF-RAN	European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network
EU	European Union
EUR	euro
FOM	Swiss Federal Office for Migration
FRAN	Frontex Risk Analysis Network
fYROM	former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
ICJ	International Court of Justice
IBM	Integrated Border Management
ID	identity document
JO	Joint Operation
MS	Member State
OCG	organised crime group
PVLMM	Post Visa-Liberalisation Monitoring Mechanism
RAU	Frontex Risk Analysis Unit
SAC	Schengen Associated Country
SIS	Schengen Information System
TFEU	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union
THY	Turkish Airlines
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UK	United Kingdom
WB-ARA	Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis
WB-RAN	Western Balkans Risk Analysis Network

Executive summary

The Western Balkans has gone through rapid and significant changes regarding irregular migration trends following the introduction of visa-free travel arrangements with Member States and Schengen Associated Countries.

For example, the region has transitioned from largely a source to mostly transit area in terms of illegal border-crossings. More precisely, almost three quarters of all detections of illegal border-crossing in the region during 2012 was due to transiting irregular migrants en route from Greece. The same share was less than 10% during 2009. Overall detections of illegal border-crossings increased by 33% in the cases of green borders and even higher 68% in the case of detections of migrants hiding in different means of transport (also cargo trains). Both developments were exclusively due to transiting migrants en route from Greece.

On the other hand, nationals from the Western Balkans were detected in greater numbers in 2012 for variety of *modi operandi* involving different type of legal travel abuse, detected either during border checks or while already in the EU. Misuse of international protection provisions in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries was by far the most prevalent given that in 2012 there were almost 33 000 or 53% more asylum applications submitted by the five visa-exempt Western Balkans nationalities (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) compared to 2011. In fact, the number was the highest since the introduction of visa-free travel and amounted to 12% of the total asylum intake in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries.*

Other abuses of legal travel channels were linked to overstay in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries. More precisely, while detections of illegal stay remained largely stable from 2009 to 2011, there were roughly one fifth more detections of Western Balkans nationals for illegal stay in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries during 2012. Increasing trend was fairly wide spread among Member States indicating thus a general tendency.

While nationals of Serbia and Albania were the most numerous in terms of detection for illegal stay, the largest increase compared to 2011 was associated with persons from the territory of Kosovo** (12% share of the total for the Western Balkans) whose detections for illegal stay rose by 62%. Furthermore, persons from the territory of Kosovo were detected in increasing numbers also across other statistical indicators of irregular migration.

Noteworthy, Albanians were the most commonly detected nationality in the EU using document fraud to illegally enter the EU/Schengen area from a third country during 2012. Almost one fifth of all detections were linked to this nationality, largely due to counterfeited entry/exit stamps designed to hide overstay.

Overall, the presented annual risk assessment, based on the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model suggests that the risk continues to be the most elevated in the case of secondary movements of migrants en route from Greece towards other Member States. This observation is firmly corroborated also by individual assessments made by all six Western Balkan countries.

** All references to Kosovo in this document are without prejudice to positions on status, and are in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

* Please note that this share is based on FRAN data on asylum indicator.



* *EU Action on migratory pressure - A strategic response (8714/1/12)*, Brussels, 23 April 2012

All identified risks affect both the Western Balkan countries and Member States and are linked to several strategic priorities identified by the EU in its 'EU Action on Migratory Pressures – A Strategic Response'.*

The enlargement of the EU in July 2013 (Croatia joining) will have significant border security implications for the region given the profound changes in the length and location

of the new land external borders of the EU. However, irregular migration trends in the Western Balkans or linked with the region will continue to be influenced the most by developments at Greek and Bulgarian borders with Turkey. Therefore, the sustainability of the increased operational activity at these border sections (the Aspida operation) is essential in this regard.

1. Introduction

As was the case with the previous three issues, this fourth edition of the Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis (WB-ARA) 2013 has been prepared in cooperation between the Risk Analysis Units of the competent border-control authorities of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (fYROM), Montenegro, Serbia and the Frontex Risk Analysis Unit (RAU).

The joint analytical activity is an integral part of the Western Balkans Risk Analysis Network (WB-RAN) in which all the mentioned Western Balkan countries actively participate.

The WB-ARA builds on knowledge from previous editions of the annual report. The analysis is structured around the following elements: (1) a description of the general context in which border controls at common

borders between Member States and Western Balkan countries occur (2) annual risk assessment that includes identification and description of the main risks affecting both the area of the Western Balkans and Member States or Schengen Associated Countries, (3) outlook, and (4) conclusions.

The statistical annex of the WB-ARA 2013 includes summary tables, describing the six key indicators of irregular migration in detail.

The Frontex Risk Analysis Unit would like to thank all WB-RAN and FRAN members for their active participation throughout 2012 and valuable input during the two Annual Analytical Review meetings with both networks in January 2013 and the Western Balkans Expert meeting in early 2013.



2. Methodology

2.1. Data collection plan

The core of this report are monthly statistical data from WB-RAN and neighbouring Member States (only common borders), focused on six key indicators of illegal migration: (1) detections of illegal border-crossing, (2) detections of facilitators, (3) detections of illegal stay, (4) refusals of entry, (5) asylum applications, and (6) detections of false documents.

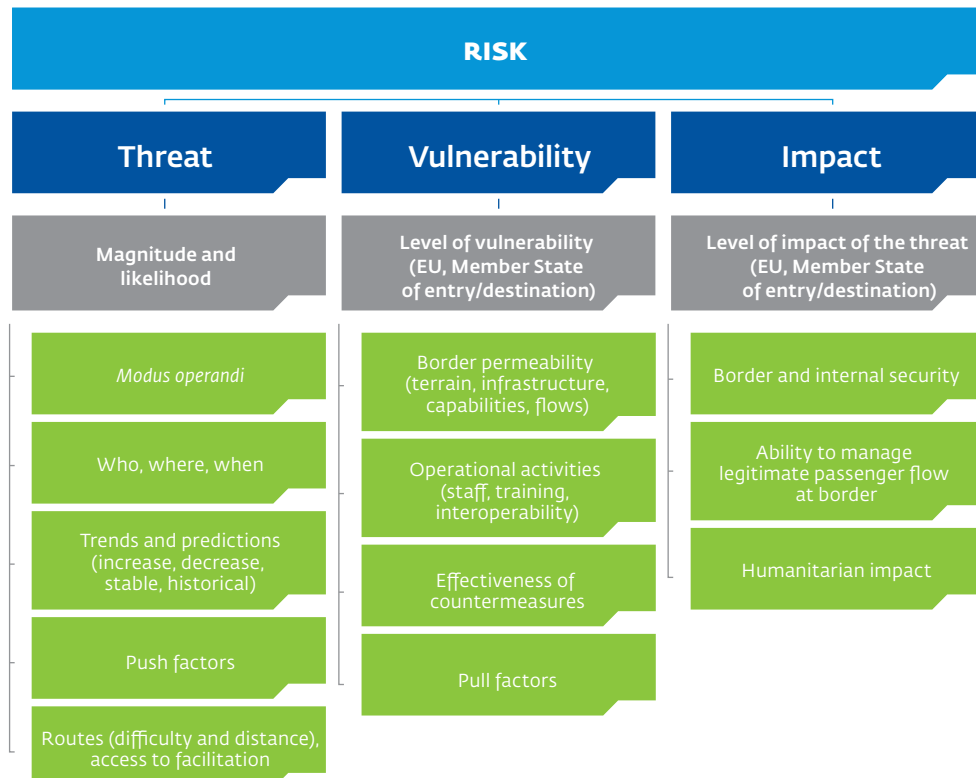
Other sources were used, in particular Frontex reporting in the context of the Post

Visa-Liberalisation Monitoring Mechanism (PVLMM), analysis from Frontex Annual Risk Analysis (ARA 2013), reporting and data from the European Document Fraud Risk Analysis Network (EDF-RAN) and Frontex reporting from different Joint Operations coordinated by Frontex.

2.2. Quality of available data

Consistent with other law-enforcement indicators, variation in administrative data related to border control depends on several factors.

Figure 1. Risk as defined by the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model (CIRAM)



In this case, the number of detections of illegal border-crossing and refusals of entry are both functions of the amount of effort spent detecting migrants and the flow of irregular migrants. For example, increased detections of illegal border-crossing might be due to an actual increase in the flow of irregular migrants, or they may in fact be an outcome of more resources made available to detect migrants. In exceptional cases, an influx of resources may produce an increase in reported detections while effectively masking the actual decrease in the flow of migrants, resulting from a strong deterrent effect.

2.3. Application of the Common Integrated Risk Analysis Model

In line with the previous edition of this annual report, the 2013 WB-ARA considers risk as defined by the updated CIRAM; a function of threat, vulnerability and impact. Such an approach endeavours to emphasise risk analysis as a key tool in ensuring the optimal allocation of resources within constraints of budget, staff and efficiency of equipment.

According to the model, a 'threat' is a force or pressure acting upon the external borders that is characterised by both its magnitude and likelihood; 'vulnerability' is defined as the capacity of a system to mitigate the threat and 'impact' is determined as the potential consequences of the threat. In this way, the structured and systematic breakdown of risk is presented in the annual risk assessment and conclusions chapters.

2.4. Risk assessment voting survey

In line with the CIRAM definition of risk, WB-RAN members were invited to provide their input by filling in a survey regarding the three main components of risk (threat, vulnerability and impact).

One week after the Annual Analytical Review, after internal consultation, a second round of voting following the same modalities was carried out.

First- and second-round replies of each WB-RAN members were merged into a general overview and used for this analysis.



Figure 2. General map of the Western Balkans region

3. The context – irregular migration

A thorough analysis of all FRAN* and WB-RAN indicators shows that, compared to 2011, irregular migration pressure from or linked to the Western Balkan countries increased further, progressively affecting more Member States and Schengen Associated Countries beyond the region itself. While there were many interesting changes in the indicators, this short overview only focuses on the most important ones in terms of identified risks.

3.1. In the Western Balkans region

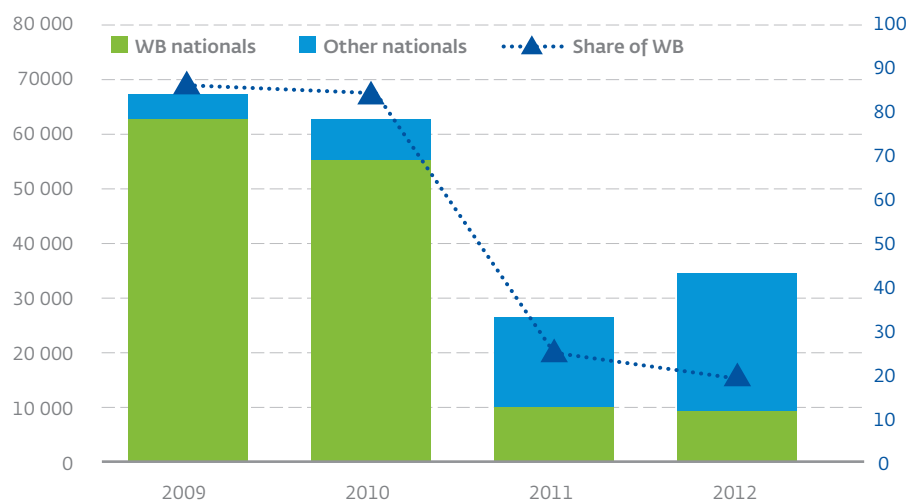
Illegal border-crossings, both between BCPs and at BCPs (hiding in vehicles), rose in most

of the region for the second year in a row (33% and 68% respectively compared to 2011). By and large, the growth was linked to non-European migrants travelling en route from Greece to other Member States. Their detections for illegal border-crossings between BCPs increased by 46%, while the same detections of nationals from the Western Balkans remained at the same level compared to 2011. Figure 3 clearly points out the transition of the Western Balkans from a source region to transit area for irregular migration given that the share of Western Balkan nationals in the overall total for illegal border-crossings between BCPs dropped from 85% in 2010 to the current 27%.

* FRAN stands for the Frontex Risk Analysis Network that brings together experts from Frontex and 27 EU Member States and Schengen Associated Countries.

Figure 3. **The Western Balkans region is predominately a transit region for secondary movements of non-European migrants en route from Greece to other Member States due to a combined effect of visa liberalisation and increasing irregular migration pressure at the Greek-Turkish borders**

Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs



Source: FRAN and WB-RAN data as of 18 February 2013

Table 1. **Overview of indicators**

As reported by WB-RAN Members

WB-RAN indicator	2010	2011	2012	% change on previous year
Illegal border-crossing between BCPs	62 965	26 244	34 839	33
Clandestine entries at BCPs	1 325	1 421	2 387	68
Facilitators	965	796	1 016	28
Illegal stay	11 916*	19 614	20 524	4.6
Refusals of entry	60 353	61 181	49 814	-19
Asylum applications**	16 075	16 681	20 451	23
False travel-document users	839	549	558	1.6

* Total does not include detections from Greece

** Applications for asylum for EU Member States include all applications received in the territory of the Member States and are not limited to claims made at the Western Balkan borders.

Source: WB-RAN and FRAN data as of 12 March 2013.

The most affected country continued to be Serbia given that four out of ten detections were made by this Western Balkan country. As during 2011, the border between Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was under particularly high pressure (24% of the regional total). Nevertheless, detections at Croatia-Serbia border rose the most in relative terms (+118% compared to 2011), confirming thus the westward shift of the secondary movements that started in late 2011. Likewise, detections of migrants hiding in vehicles increased the most on the westward part of the transiting routes.

As during 2011, Afghans remained the top nationality detected for illegal border-crossings both at green borders and at BCPs, however, Syrians and Somalis showed the highest increasing trend. To be exact, there were 2 000 Somalis detected for illegal border-crossing between BCPs during 2012 compared to 617 during 2011. Likewise, detections of Syrians rose 17 times compared to 2011.

Importantly, when looking into nationalities from the Western Balkans, only detections of persons from the territory of Kosovo increased substantially compared to 2011 (+85% or 1 287).

3.2. In the EU and Schengen Associated Countries

In terms of irregular migration, by far the most important development is associated with the well-documented abuse of visa liberalisation process for the Western Balkan countries.

More precisely, unfounded asylum applications by the five visa-exempt Western Balkan nationalities during 2012 rose by 53% compared to 2011. Furthermore, the share of the five visa-exempt nationalities in the overall EU total (as reported in FRAN) rose from 8% during 2011 to 12% during 2012.

At the same time, refusals of entry issued by Member States and Schengen Associated Countries to nationals of the Western Balkan countries fell by one fifth compared to 2011, while detections of illegal stay in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries increased by roughly the same margin compared to 2011. This trend was quite opposite compared to the overall EU trend given that the number of detections of illegal stay across all Member States and Schengen Associated Countries during 2012 decreased by almost 5% in the same year.

Table 2. **Illegal border crossings between BCPs as reported by WB-RAN countries and the neighbouring Member States indicate the growing importance of the Western Balkans as transit area for secondary movements**

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total	Highest share
Top Ten Nationalities						
						Border section
Afghanistan	2 498	7 369	8 065	9.4	23	fYROM - Serbia (37%)
Albania	53 078	6 671	6 602	-1	19	Albania - Greece (89%)
Pakistan	202	3 331	5 033	51	14	fYROM - Serbia (63%)
Algeria	217	1 026	3 029	195	8.7	Romania - Serbia (34%)
Somalia	375	617	2 000	224	5.7	Croatia - Serbia (47%)
Syria	37	92	1 646	1 689	4.7	Croatia - Serbia (43%)
Morocco	128	702	1 361	94	3.9	Romania - Serbia (46%)
Kosovo*	508	697	1 287	85	3.7	Hungary - Serbia (68%)
Serbia	1 012	848	747	-12	2.1	Hungary - Serbia (55%)
Palestine	1 621	794	595	-25	1.7	Romania - Serbia (25%)
Others	3 289	4 097	4 474	9.2	13	Croatia - Slovenia (23%)
Total	62 965	26 244	34 839	33	100	

* 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

Source: FRAN and WB-RAN data as of 18 February 2013

Document fraud detected by Member States and Schengen Associated Countries continued to be largely driven by detections of Albanian nationals. Moreover, Albanians were the most commonly detected nationality for using document fraud to illegally enter the EU/Schengen area from a third country during 2012.

3.3. Underlying factors for the changes in the indicators

The highlighted changes in the indicators were influenced mostly by (a) developments at Greek-Turkish borders, (b) continued expanding air connections of Turkish Airlines into the Horn of Africa and West Africa (in particular Istanbul-Mogadishu route), and (c) limited effectiveness of measures taken to reduce the abuse of legal travel channels (visa liberalisation).

Developments at Greece-Turkey borders

During the first half of 2012, detections of irregular migrants at Greece-Turkey land borders continued to increase at a staggering rate. By the end of June 2012, there were already almost 21 000 migrants detected for illegal border-crossings or 27% more than during the same six months of 2011. Almost 60% of all detections for illegal border-crossing in the EU during the first half of 2012 occurred at Greece-Turkey land border. The peak was reached during July 2012 when more than 7 000 migrants were detected.

Greek authorities responded to the surge by implementing operations Xenios Zeus and Aspida (Shield) at the beginning of August 2012.

Greek authorities also accelerated building of the fence spanning the 12.5-kilometre dry land border stretch with Turkey from Kast-



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Figure 4. **Border fence between Greece and Turkey completed at the end of 2012**

anies to the Greek village of Nea Vyssa, near the northeastern town of Orestiada (Fig. 4).

As a result, from 6 August 2012 onwards the number of apprehensions at the Greek-Turkish land border dropped significantly. Importantly, in subsequent months the numbers were up to ten times lower compared to the peak during July 2012. There was less than 300 detections during the last three months of 2012 reported at this border section. Consequently, its share of the EU total fell from roughly 60% during the second quarter of 2012 to only 2% by the end of 2012.

At the same time, the measures to counter grey economy in Greece (part of the Xenios Zeus operation) were compounded by severe economic crisis and a general rise of xenophobic attacks against or harassment of migrants there. Consequently, many migrants that were already in Greece prior to the start of the two operations decided to leave Greece for other Member States or Schengen Associated Countries. This has been corroborated also by Frontex operational intelligence.

However, due to the increased operational measures in the context of Xenios Zeus, it became more difficult to leave Greece through intra-Schengen flights or on regular ferries towards Italy. This is suggested by a decreasing trend for irregular migrants recorded in the context of EDF-RAN data collection and Frontex Operational activities (JO Poseidon Sea and JO Aeneas).

Undoubtedly, Xenios Zeus and Aspida operations in Greece were very effective in terms of reducing the new arrivals from Turkey.

However, as a result, leaving Greece through the Western Balkan route became an increasingly attractive alternative during the second part of 2012.

Turkish Airlines expand further into Africa

Turkish Airlines (THY) continued to expand its network of international destinations, mostly in Africa. Consequently, the number of passengers carried by THY exceeded 39 million during 2012 with most of the growth generated on international routes.

For example, during 2012, THY inaugurated new routes to Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nouakchott in Mauritania and Mogadishu (via Khartoum) in Somalia.

THY became the first international airline to fly to Mogadishu after two decades of conflict in this Horn of Africa nation. With the new route starting, issues related to document fraud (look-alike method) or student visa abuses were increasingly mentioned. In one reported case, three high-ranking officials have been arrested for mismanaging one scholarship scheme that sends Somali students to Turkey. The officials were arrested for offering the scholarships to undeserving students.

Measures to counter the abuse of visa-free travel channel: the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

Operational measures

- Strengthened exit controls: check of necessary financial means, conducting interviews in reference to their destination, the purpose and the motives for the travel.

Public awareness campaigns

The project 'No more abuse of the visa-liberalisation' gives priority to educational meetings in the relevant municipalities. The activities include:

- Educational workshops and meetings with local communities;
- Advisory groups of citizens;
- Public tribunals;
- Meetings with Non-Governmental Organisations;
- Meetings with the local councils for prevention of abuse of visa-free regime;
- More than of 10 000 leaflets in all languages with detailed information on visa-free regime were distributed during such meetings.

Legislative measures

The Law amending the Criminal Code of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia was adopted at the end of 2011. The law provides for a new criminal offence: 'Abuse of the visa-free regime with the Member States of the European Union and of the Schengen Agreement'. The amendments foresee that 'any person who recruits, encourages, organises, harbours or transports persons into a Member State of the European Union and the Schengen Agreement, for the purpose of obtaining or exercising social, economic or other rights, contrary to the law of the European Union, regulations of the Member States of the European Union and to the Schengen Agreement and international law, shall be punished with imprisonment of at least four years'. Liability of legal entities that provide transportation in such cases is also foreseen (transportation means used for committing the offence are confiscated).

Likewise, amendments of the Law on Travel Documents allow for passport to be confiscated for a period of one year if the person in question is forcibly returned from another country.

While the arrests demonstrated the commitment of the new authorities in Mogadishu to fight corruption, they also pointed to a major vulnerability in the Turkish student visa scheme allowing many Somalis to abuse it.

Furthermore, ever since the last three months of 2012, there has been a steady increase of illegal border-crossings by African country nationals at the land border between Bulgaria and Turkey. Relative share of this group



of irregular migrants was only 15% in January 2012, however, it rose to about 50% in January and February 2013.

In conclusion, THY expansion into Africa makes travelling to Turkey increasingly easy and cheap for those Africans who travel with the intention to subsequently enter the EU irregularly and continue further through the Western Balkans.

Limited effectiveness of measures taken to reduce the abuse of legal travel channels (visa liberalisation)

All five visa-exempt Western Balkan nationalities have demonstrated additional com-

mitment during 2012 to further reduce the extent of asylum abuse associated with the visa liberalisation. As shown by the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (see box) the set of measures include those at borders, inland and related to legislation. These or very similar measures are also implemented in the other four visa-exempt countries.

Still, the asylum abuse by the five nationalities in the EU and Schengen Associated Countries increased to unprecedented levels during 2012 pointing thus to somewhat limited impact of the regional efforts against the abuse.



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4. Annual risk assessment

As introduced in the previous annual analysis (WB-ARA 2012), the annual risk assessment is guided by the CIRAM working definition of risk as a function of three main components: threat, vulnerability and impact.* It largely builds on the main findings from the same exercise last year.

This chapter is meant to inform coordinated planning and strategic decisions at the highest policy level in the Western Balkans and the EU.

It draws heavily from a detailed analysis of the available monthly statistical data (FRAN, WB-RAN and EDF-RAN), Frontex operational data and bi-monthly or quarterly analytical reports provided by both FRAN and WB-RAN members. In addition, it also takes into account the outcome of the Annual Analytical Review workshop with Member State and Schengen Associated Country analysts and a similar workshop with WB-RAN countries (both events occurred in January 2013).

Each identified risk is described in detail, broken down by its main components. A summary risk table at the beginning of each detailed description is added allowing for a rapid understanding of the issues at stake. The following three main risks and five specific threats are considered in this assessment:

1. Risk of large and sustained secondary movements from Greece through the Western Balkans

- Illegal border-crossing at green borders
 - Clandestine entries through BCPs
2. Risk of large and sustained abuse of legal travel channels by nationals from the Western Balkans countries
 - Asylum misuse
 - Illegal stay in Member States
 - Document fraud
 3. Risk of increased smuggling of stolen vehicles, drugs and weapons across the common borders;

The list is somewhat different compared to the one in the last year's report since it does not contain descriptions of risks associated with irregular migration of Turkish nationals through the Western Balkans towards the EU and misuse of international protection in the Western Balkans region itself. The reasons for this choice are simple: compared to 2011, all relevant indicators suggest that irregular migration of Turkish nationals through the Western Balkans decreased, reducing the level of risk accordingly.

In the case of asylum misuse, while the risk remained elevated, claiming asylum and absconding afterwards continued to be done in a very similar and well documented (in WB-ARA 2012 and WB-ARA 2011) fashion as a specific *modus operandi* inevitably linked to the risk of secondary movements from Greece.

* According to the CIRAM model, a 'threat' is a force or pressure acting upon the external borders that is characterised by both its magnitude and likelihood; 'vulnerability' is defined as the capacity of a system to mitigate the threat and 'impact' is determined as the consequences of the threat.



4.1. Risk of large and sustained secondary movements from Greece through the Western Balkans

Risk name	Risk of large and sustained secondary movements from Greece through the Western Balkans
Threat – illegal border-crossings between BCPs	Magnitude as assessed by WB-RAN countries Serbia: Severe Bosnia and Herzegovina: Intermediate Albania: Severe former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: High Montenegro: High Croatia: High
Threat – hiding in vehicles	Magnitude as assessed by WB-RAN countries Serbia: High Bosnia and Herzegovina: Moderate Albania: Intermediate former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: High Montenegro: Low Croatia: High
Main border sections	Serbia-fYROM, Croatia-Slovenia, Serbia-Hungary, Serbia-Croatia

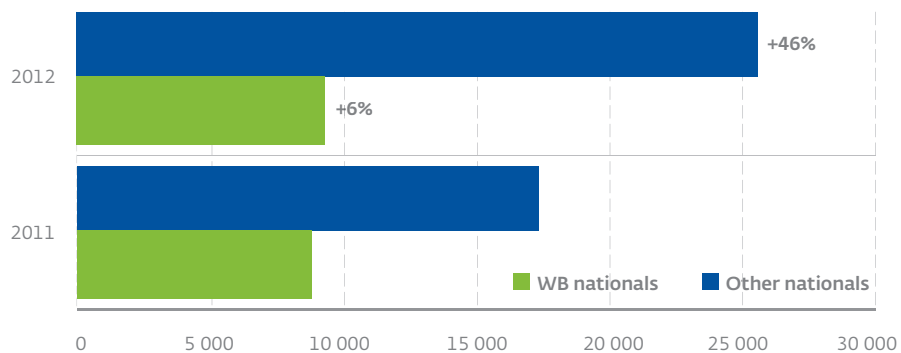
4.1.1. Description of the threat

As during previous years, Greece is often not considered as the final destination for irregular migrants that enter the EU through Greece-Turkey borders. Most plan to travel to other Member States or Schengen Associated Countries, either immediately or after sufficient means are raised to finance their

onward journey. In essence, migrants have three main options to exit Greece and reach other Member States: (a) by air on an intra-Schengen flight, (b) by sea on an intra-Schengen ferry to Italy or (c) by land, either through the Western Balkans or Bulgaria.

Unsurprisingly, the Western Balkans is now for the second year running mostly tran-

Figure 5. **Detections of illegal border-crossings between BCPs at the common and regional borders clearly show the growing importance of the Western Balkans for secondary movements of irregular migrants from Greece to other Member States and Schengen Associated Countries**



Source: WB-RAN and FRAN data as 18 February 2013

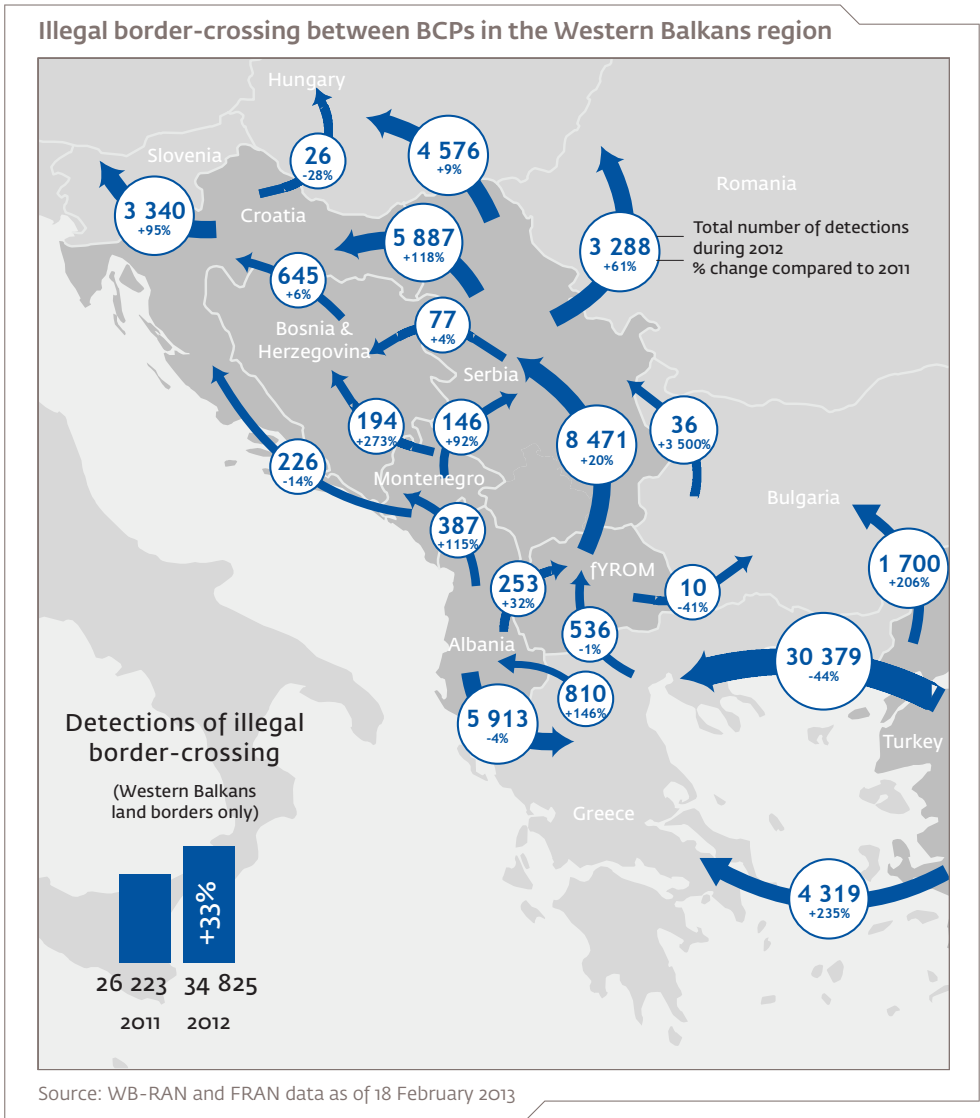


Figure 6. **Detections of illegal border-crossings between BCPs in 2012 as reported by WB-RAN countries and neighbouring Member States**

sit area for secondary movements of non-European irregular migrants. Almost three quarters (73%) of all illegal border-crossings (or 25 554 cases) reported by WB-RAN countries and the neighbouring Member States during 2012 was associated with this group (see Fig. 5).

Therefore, the Western Balkan route remained largely a function of the transiting flow through the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, Albania, Montenegro and Croatia.



Illegal border-crossing between BCPs

There were almost 35 000 detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs reported by Western Balkan countries and their neighbouring Member States during 2012 (common and regional borders). The number was 33% higher compared to 2011. Serbia was by far the top reporting country in the region with 40% share, followed by Croatia (18% share).

It is notable that Serbia detected slightly more illegal border-crossings between BCPs than Italy (ranked second in the EU total) and more than double compared to Spain (ranked third in the EU total) during 2012. Furthermore, detections in Croatia and Serbia during the fourth quarter of 2012 were higher than in any Member States or Schengen Associated Countries, including Greece.

Most of the mentioned 33% annual growth was linked to secondary movements of Afghans, Pakistanis, Algerians, Somalis, Syrians and Moroccans en route from Greece to other Member States. By and large detections occurred at Serbia's borders with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, where the smuggling of migrants is believed to be increasingly organised.

This trend of increased reliance on facilitation services (vs self-organised with simple instructions, maps and directions) on the main routing through Serbia started already at the end of 2011.

Westward shift intensified during 2012

The growth of detections at the Croatia-Slovenia and Serbia-Croatia borders (double the number compared to 2011) appears to be confirming a westward shift in the routing, already detected at the end of 2011. In fact, irregular migrants were increasingly attempting to cross from Serbia to Croatia and further to Slovenia rather than to Hungary.

Detections at Romania-Serbia border showed an annual increase of 63%, however, the flow there started to decline during the last three months of 2012.

Nationalities

Despite relatively stable trend, Afghans remained the largest nationality with more than 8 000 detections. The number of detected Syrians continued to increase strongly during the last quarter of 2012. In fact, there were 1 646 Syrians detected for illegal-border-crossing compared to only 92 during 2011.

By the end of 2012, nationals of Eritrea were the fastest growing group of migrants: their number rose from only 20 in the third quarter to more than 300 during the fourth quarter. Similarly nationals of Mali grew from only three in the third quarter to 78 in the fourth quarter.

Importantly, more Pakistanis were detected in the Western Balkans compared to Greece-Turkey borders, where Aspida operation led to significant decrease in 2012 (see Fig. 9). This in turn indicates that nationals from Pakistan who were staying illegally in Greece for some time before Aspida and Xenios Zeus operations (up to several years in some cases) were increasingly deciding to leave Greece through the Western Balkans.

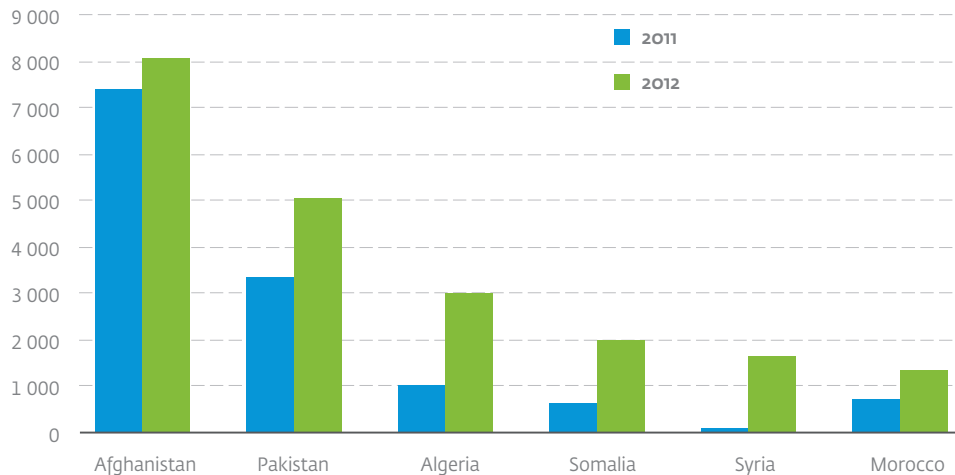
Hiding in vehicles

Importantly, detections of migrants hiding in vehicles continued to increase in 2012. There were 1 667 (an 87% increase compared to 2011) migrants detected in vehicles at different regional BCPs while trying to clandestinely avoid border checks.

As in the case of green border crossings, Serbia detected by far the most persons hidden in transport means (50% share of total), followed by Croatia and Slovenia. Most were detected through extensive use of techni-

Figure 7. Comparison between 2011 and 2012 shows significant increases for Somali and Syrian migrants detected at regional and common borders

Detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs



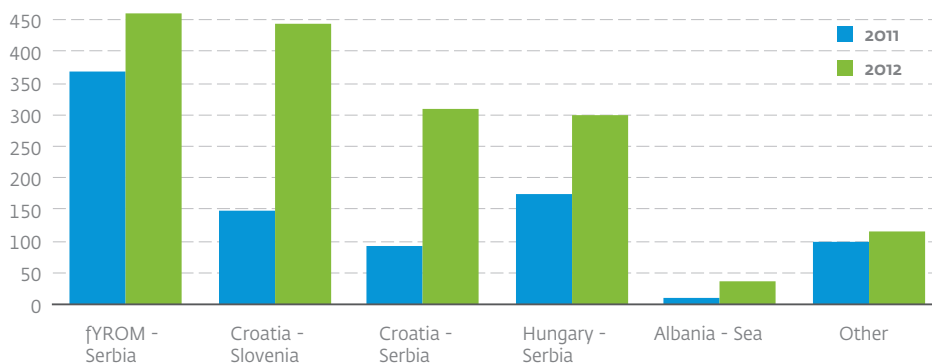
Source: FRAN and WB-RAN as of 18 February 2013

cal means (CO₂ detectors) Importantly, detections of migrants hidden in vehicles at the border between Serbia and Croatia rose by a massive 240%, thus indicating further previously mentioned westward shift in the routing.

Afghans were the top nationality with one third of all detections. Similarly to illegal border-crossings between BCPs, the number of Syrians grew strongly mostly during the last three months of 2012.

Figure 8. There were more than 1 600 detections of migrants hiding in vehicles attempting to cross regional or common borders during 2012, the increase being by far the most pronounced at Croatia-Slovenia and Croatia-Serbia borders (200% and 240%, respectively)

Detections of persons hidden in vehicles



Source: WB-RAN and FRAN data as of 18 February 2013

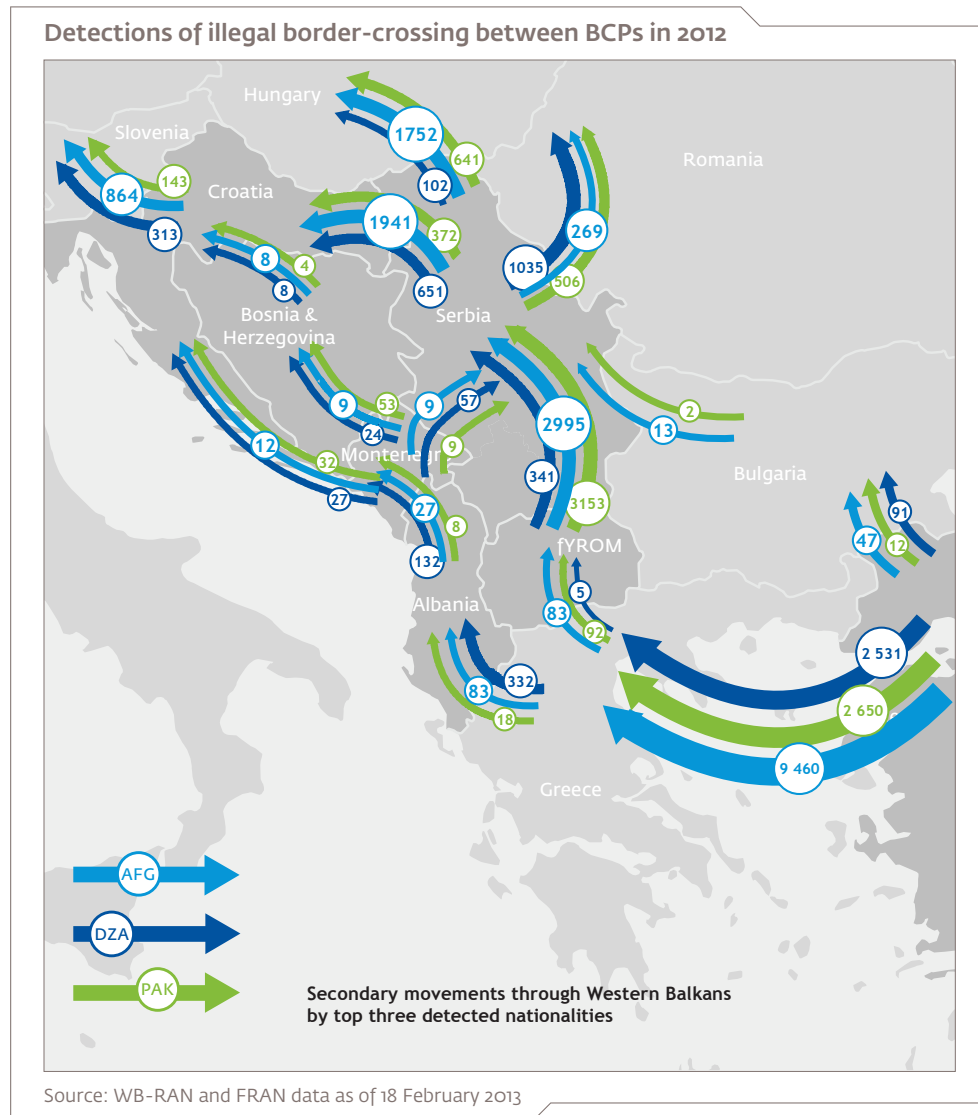


Figure 9. Main areas of detections of illegal border-crossing between BCPs for Afghan (AFG), Pakistani (PAK) and Algerian (DZA) migrants

Increased reliance on facilitation services

The described trends continue to suggest that more migrants en route from Greece are opting for crossing the regional and common borders hidden in vehicles and are therefore relying on more sophisticated facilitation/smuggling services. This *modus op-*

erandi, however, contains a high risk of loss of life, especially when closed hidden compartments are used in cars, buses, trains and containers.

The increased reliance on facilitation was well demonstrated by a recent (January 2013) pan-European case in which more than 100



© Serbian Border Police

Figure 12. **Migrants hiding in cargo train, detected by Serbian authorities during 2012**

persons were arrested on suspicion of being part of a people-smuggling facilitation network. Suspects were arrested in Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Poland, Slovak Republic, Turkey and Kosovo region.

All arrested persons were suspected of being involved in smuggling of a large number of irregular migrants both into and within the EU mainly via the Western Balkan region.

The migrants were often smuggled in inhuman and dangerous conditions, such as in very small hidden compartments in the floor of buses or trucks, in freight trains or on boats. In some cases falsified travel documents were used by the migrants. Marriages of convenience were also used as a *modus operandi* to regularise their status in the EU.

This was one of the largest Europol co-ordinated investigations against people smugglers, involving more than 1200 police officers.

Variations in *modi operandi* and use of cargo trains

According to information provided by Western Balkan countries and several Member States, there was a considerable variation in *modi operandi* according to:

- **Points of departure and the level of facilitation provided:** migrants either started directly from Turkey and travelled through the Western Balkans without stopping (full package) or opted for several stops in the Western Balkans (cheaper but longer).
- **Types of vehicles used:** migrants continued to use all available transport means ranging from public buses, cars, lorries and cargo or passenger trains. The novel development is linked to transport of lorries on railway (cargo trains, see box)
- **Level of organisation and planning:** migrants were either boarding lorries or trains without the knowledge of drivers or were provided with sophisticated package that included front vehicles to alert against possible police controls inland.

In some reported cases irregular migrants have been placed onto railway carriages of trains with international routes that depart from Greece. Abuse of customs stamps and seals was used to illegally transport these persons from Greece to other Member States via the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Hungary.

Main organisers/facilitators continue to be Afghan or Pakistani nationals with many local associates (e.g. drivers, providers of safe houses or guides).



4.2. Risk of large and sustained abuse of legal travel channels by nationals from the Western Balkan countries

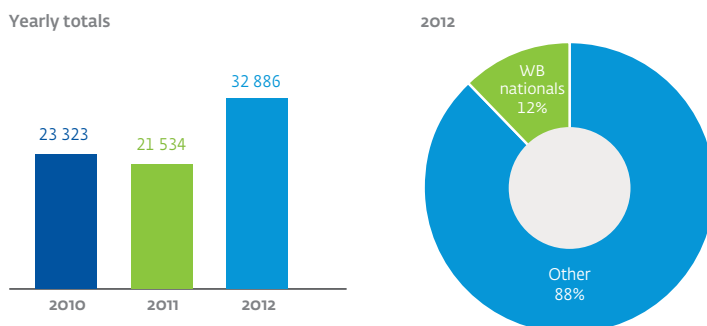
Risk name	Risk of large and sustained abuse of legal travel channels by nationals from the Western Balkan countries
Threat – asylum misuse	Magnitude by nationality Serbia: High Bosnia and Herzegovina: Intermediate Albania: Intermediate former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: High Montenegro: Low
Threat – illegal stay and document fraud	Magnitude by nationality Serbia: Moderate Bosnia and Herzegovina: Low Albania: High former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia: Low Montenegro: Low Kosovo: High
Main border sections	Croatia-Slovenia, Serbia-Hungary, Serbia-Croatia, Greece-Albania
Main affected Member States and Schengen Associated Countries	Germany, Sweden, Luxembourg, Belgium, Switzerland, the UK, Denmark, France

4.2.1. Asylum abuse in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries

According to FRAN data, the number of overall asylum claims in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries during 2012 increased by 7.1% compared to 2011. Syrian nationals were the highest rising national-

ity in 2012 given that their numbers rose to nearly 22 424 applications (less than 9 000 applications in 2011). Nevertheless, almost 33 000 asylum seekers from the five visa-exempt Western Balkan countries (Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro) during 2012 contributed the most to the overall increase in the EU.

Figure 11. Asylum applications by five visa-exempt Western Balkan nationalities, comparison between 2010, 2011 and 2012



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013

In fact, the number of asylum applications by the mentioned five Western Balkan nationalities during 2012 was 53% higher compared to 2011 and the largest recorded so far in the context of Frontex Post Visa-Liberalisation Monitoring Mechanism (PVLMM). Furthermore, the share of the five visa-exempt nationalities in the overall EU total (as reported in FRAN) rose from 8% during 2011 to 12% during 2012 (see Fig. 11).

Serbian nationals continued to be the single largest visa-exempt nationality claiming asylum in the EU during 2012. With more

than 15 900, or 6% of total asylum intake in the EU in 2012, Serbs were also the fourth-ranked nationality (after Afghans, Syrians and Russians) of asylum applicants in the EU. Combined, asylum applications from the five visa-exempt Western Balkan nationalities amounted to roughly 97% of all asylum applications submitted by all visa-free nationalities (see Fig. 12).

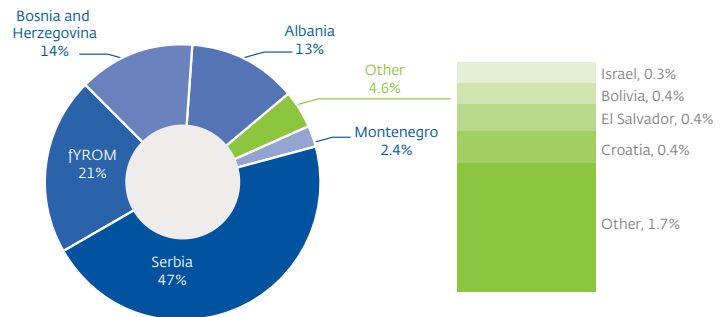
Distribution of asylum applications by Member States and Schengen Associated Countries

As indicated by the Figure 13, most Member States and Schengen Associated Countries reported various degrees of increases. It has to be stressed, however, that apart from Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, Belgium and Luxembourg (top five Member States and Schengen Associated Countries), asylum applications remained fairly modest in other Member States and Schengen Associated Countries. Namely, the top five Member States and Schengen Associated Countries handled nine out of ten asylum applications from the mentioned five Western Balkan nationalities (around 29 000). In Germany alone, 15 700 applications were submitted or 154% more compared to 2011. Sweden handled 7 175 cases, roughly one fifth more than the year before, while in Switzerland the numbers rose by 50% to 3 706.

Luxembourg remained slightly below the 2011 levels (1 445) and Belgium was the only among the five countries to report a significant decreasing trend (-38%) compared to 2011

The UK and Denmark were the only other two Member States with more than 500 asylum applications from the five visa-exempt nationalities. They both reported significant increasing trends; 118% in the case of the UK and 242% in the case of Denmark (from 173 in 2011 to 591 in 2012). These two Member States were targeted almost exclusively by

Figure 12. Other visa-free nationalities submit largely insignificant numbers of asylum claims in the EU compared to those submitted by the five Western Balkan nationalities



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013, the European Commission (visas)

Ethnic background of asylum seekers

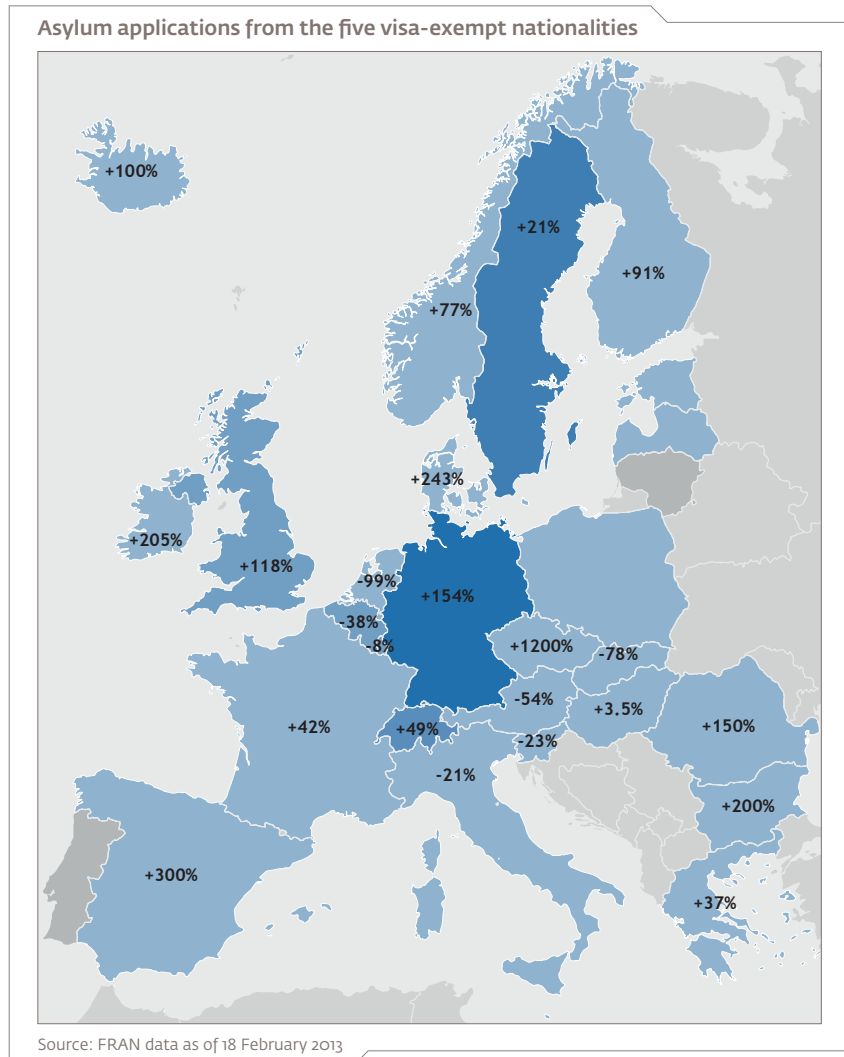
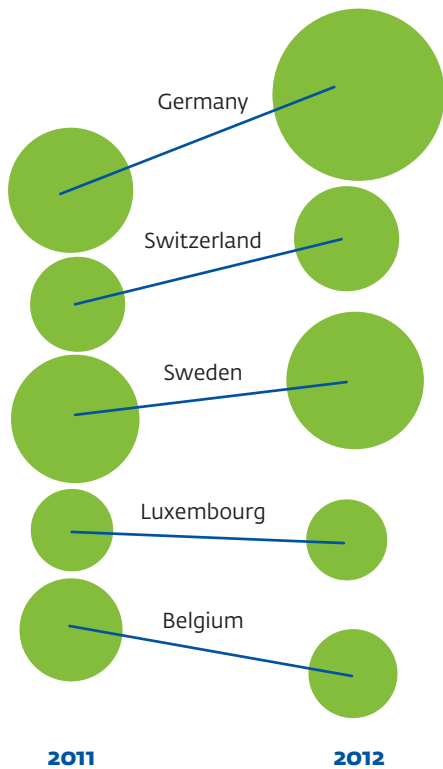
As during 2011, available data suggests that majority of all asylum seekers from the Western Balkans were of Roma ethnic background. In Germany, for example, more than 80% of all applicants were Roma. In the case of Sweden, the percentage was similar, however, the authorities conducted a study during the autumn 2012 peak period to re-examine the prevailing ethnic profile of asylum applicants from the Western Balkans.

Sweden determines the ethnicity of applicants on the basis of their declared mother tongue. Thus, if the applicant claimed the Romani language as the mother tongue, then he or she was automatically listed as having Roma ethnic background.

However, the study showed that there were probably even more Roma people among the asylum seekers in Sweden than previously believed. The reason is that many Roma also speak languages other than Romani (e.g. Serbian) and that they can state another language as their mother tongue.



Figure 13. **Distribution of asylum applications from the five visa-exempt nationalities in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries (map) and relative changes compared to 2011 (bubble chart)**



Note: For the Netherlands, inland asylum applications in Q3 and Q4 2012 and the breakdown by nationality for inland asylum applications in Q1 and Q2 2012 are not available at this moment. For France, only asylum applications at the external borders are reported, not inland applications.

only two nationalities respectively; Albanians (the UK) and Serbs (Denmark).

Asylum recognition rates in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries for the applicants of the five visa-exempt nationalities were generally below 1%. In the case of Germany they were as low as 0.2% for Serbian nationals. This in turn continues to indicate largely unfounded nature of these asylum claims.

Distribution of asylum applications by Western Balkan nationalities

All five visa-exempt Western Balkan nationalities submitted more asylum applications

during 2012 compared to 2011. The increases ranged from 38% in the case of Serbia to 128% in the case of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Unsurprisingly, Serbian nationals remained by far the top nationality with more than 15 900 applications or 48% share of the total. Compared to 2011, share of Serb applications in the total fell by 10 percentage points, largely due to substantial increasing trend associated with nationals of Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Germany was by far the most preferred destination. Apart from Albanians, all other four visa-exempt nationalities submitted most of their applications in this Member State. In fact, in the case of nationals from Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and

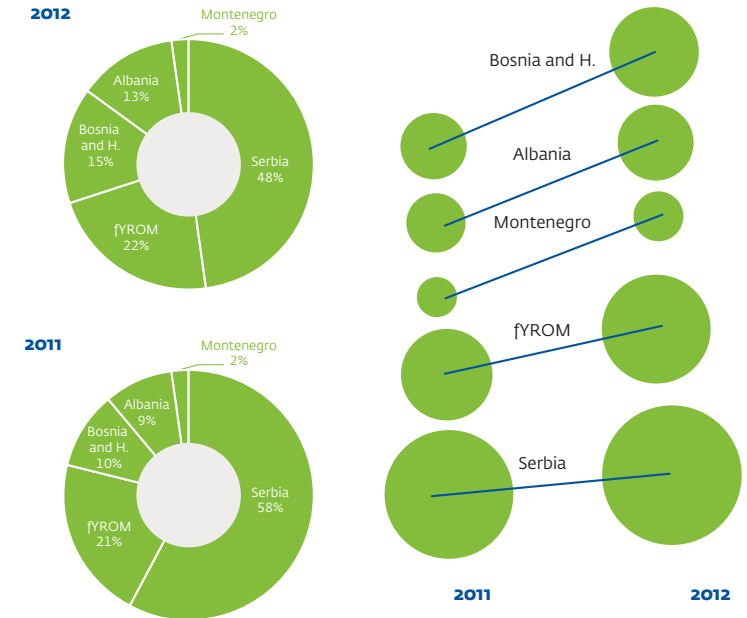
Figure 14. Distribution of asylum applications made in 2012 by the five visa-exempt nationalities in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries and relative changes compared to 2011

Bosnia-Herzegovina, the share of applications in Germany was between 66% and 72%.

Albanian applicants differed the most in terms of selected Member States and Schengen Associated Countries. While Sweden was the number one choice, the UK and Greece were also targeted. This was not the case with other visa-exempt nationality from the Western Balkans (see Fig. 15).

Seasonality and peaks

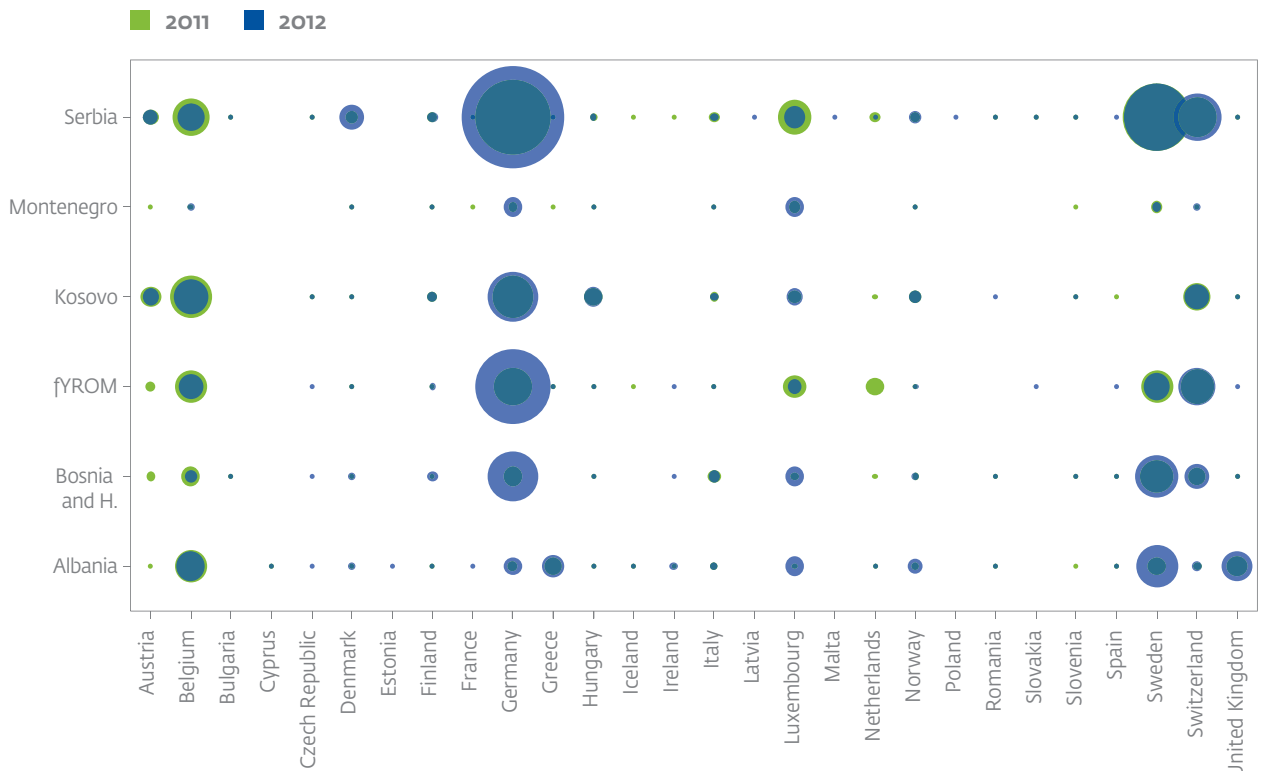
Similar to 2010 and 2011 developments, the peak was reached during the last quarter of 2012, more precisely in October when almost 7 000 applications were submitted. The peak was particularly pronounced in



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013

Figure 15. Asylum application choices during 2011 (green circle) and 2012 (blue circle) by the five visa-exempt Western Balkan nationalities and persons arriving from the territory of Kosovo (for comparison)

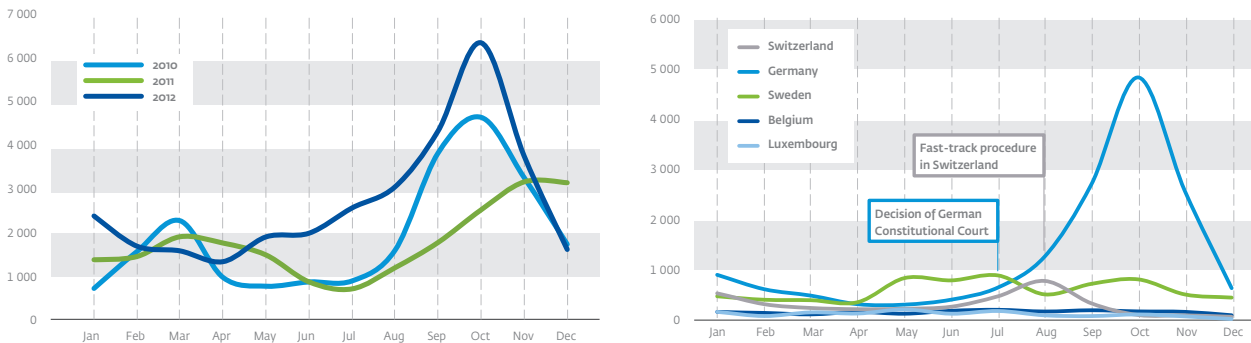
For the Netherlands, inland asylum applications in Q3 and Q4 2012 and the breakdown by nationality for inland asylum applications in Q1 and Q2 2012 are not available at this moment. For France, only asylum applications at the external borders are reported, not inland applications



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013



Figure 16. Yearly comparison and relative distribution among the top five Member States and Schengen Associated Countries in 2012; displacement towards Germany started in mid-July



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013

Germany and has started to gather pace in mid-July 2012 when Sweden was replaced by Germany as the Member State with the highest number of asylum applications from the five visa-exempt Western Balkan nationalities. Switzerland, on the other hand, started to report significantly lower numbers after August 2012 after a period of three months of constant increases.

The peak in Germany was probably linked with the German Constitutional Court's Decision of July 2012, which stipulated that the benefits afforded for asylum applicants should increase and in part be disbursed in cash.

Similarly, the drop in Switzerland at the beginning of August 2012 was associated with the introduction of several measures by the Swiss Federal Office for Migration (FOM). More precisely, FOM introduced a fast-track procedure for all visa-exempt European countries, allowing decision on merits to be taken within 48 hours. In addition, the set of new measures included:

- A preliminary interview where a potential applicant is briefed about negative consequences of an unfounded asylum application (before a formal application is submitted);
- Cancellation of all forms of return assistance for failed asylum seekers from visa-

exempt European countries. This measure has been in place since April 2012; however, from the beginning of August 2012 not even travel allowances were granted anymore;

- A re-entry ban (SIS alert of five years) to be issued to all failed asylum seekers who do not cooperate with the FOM, refuse to leave or make multiple unjustified applications.

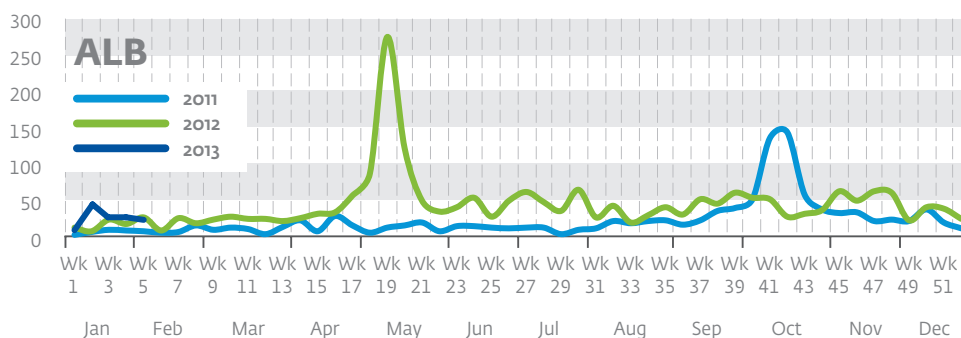
New developments

Rumour-based surges – the case of Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina

Albanians became the top nationality applying for asylum in Sweden during April-May 2012 period, an unprecedented development since the PVLMM reporting began. The trend was very similar to the October-November 2011 peak in Belgium, when asylum applications made by Albanian nationals increased significantly, only to decrease rapidly soon afterwards (see Fig. 17).

In line with this observation, the increasing trend was spurred by rumours that Sweden would accept asylum applications for economic reasons. The exponential growth prompted the Swedish authorities to take immediate action (see box).

Figure 17. Shorted-lived surge nature of Albanian asylum applications in the top five Member States and Schengen Associated Countries, weekly data comparison



Source: PVLMM data as of 18 February 2013

Importantly, by the end of May 2012, Albanian asylum applications had dropped back to the pre-peak levels. This sudden increase followed by the equally sudden decrease is an additional indication that an immediate reaction by authorities is the key to mitigation when rumours are the primary reason behind a surge (similarly to developments in Belgium during the October-November 2011 peak).

After the May 2012 surge of Albanian applications, Sweden again reported a very similar increasing trend during June 2012, this time due to applications filed by nationals from Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Unlike most of applicants from Bosnia and Herzegovina before, persons involved in this particular surge had a more long-term strategy for trying to stay in Sweden. According to the Swedish authorities, many of them allegedly sold their property believing they have a real chance of obtaining residence permits in Sweden.

The asylum abuse issue during June-July 2012 peak remained quite localised. Many of the asylum seekers in Sweden originated from north-eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina, close to the border with Serbia.

Increase of exit refusals and a drop in refusals of entry to the EU

All Western Balkan countries took additional measures at their borders in order to prevent possible abuses of visa-free travel arrangements resulting in an increase in exit refusals. Most were refused exit because they were unable to justify the purpose of their travel or were previously deported from EU/Schengen countries.

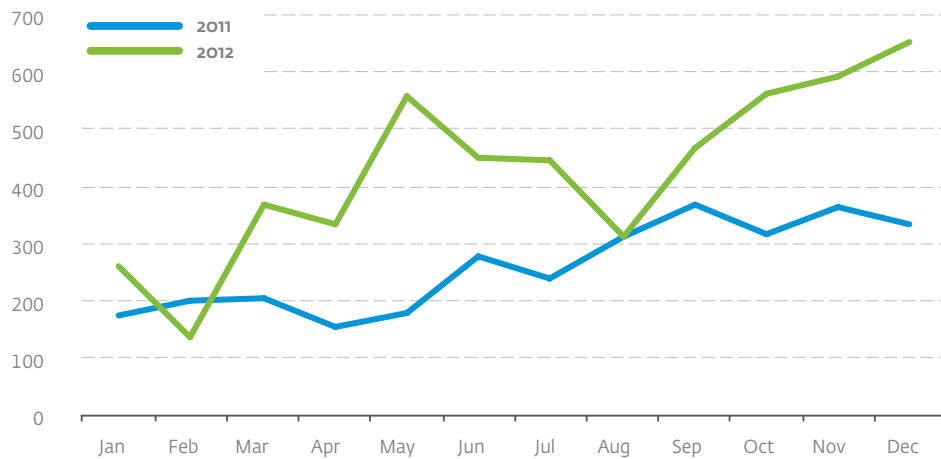
Authorities react immediately to the surge in Sweden

Swedish consular authorities in Albania issued a strong public statement warning all those intending to misuse visa-free travel for claiming asylum in Sweden that their applications for economic reasons would be swiftly rejected. All such individuals would be issued a re-entry ban and, subsequently, entered into the Schengen Information System (SIS alert). Such ban would prevent them from legal travel to the Schengen area for at least five years.

Consequently, the Swedish authorities reported a decrease in Albanian asylum applications at Arlanda airport during the second half of May 2012. The authorities there also stated that most of the applicants were later flying on the route from Podgorica in Montenegro to Arlanda via Istanbul using Turkish Airlines for the whole trip.



Figure 18. **Rising number of exit refusals in Albania show an increased resolve of the authorities to minimise visa-free travel abuse**

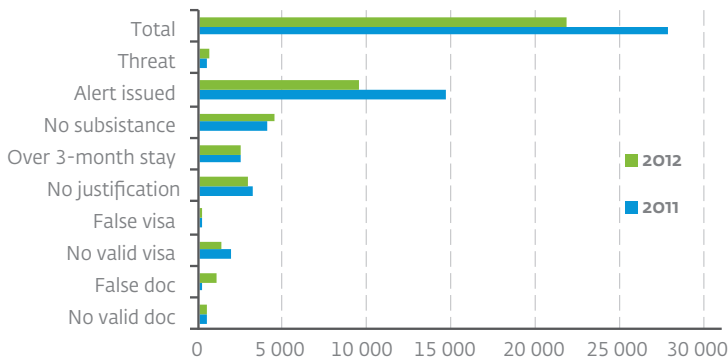


Source: Albanian Border Police

For example, authorities in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia refused exit to roughly 7 500 and 6 700 travellers respectively during 2012. These additional steps were taken by the Western Balkan authorities as a part of the overall package of measures to reduce the abuse of visa-free travel arrangements.

* Data on illegal stay from Sweden is excluded.

Figure 19. **Refusals of entry for the five visa-exempt nationalities during 2012 have decreased by 21% compared to 2011, most notably due to significant declines in Greece and Italy (both linked to Albanian nationals), linked to reason H of the Schengen Borders Code (SIS alert)**



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013

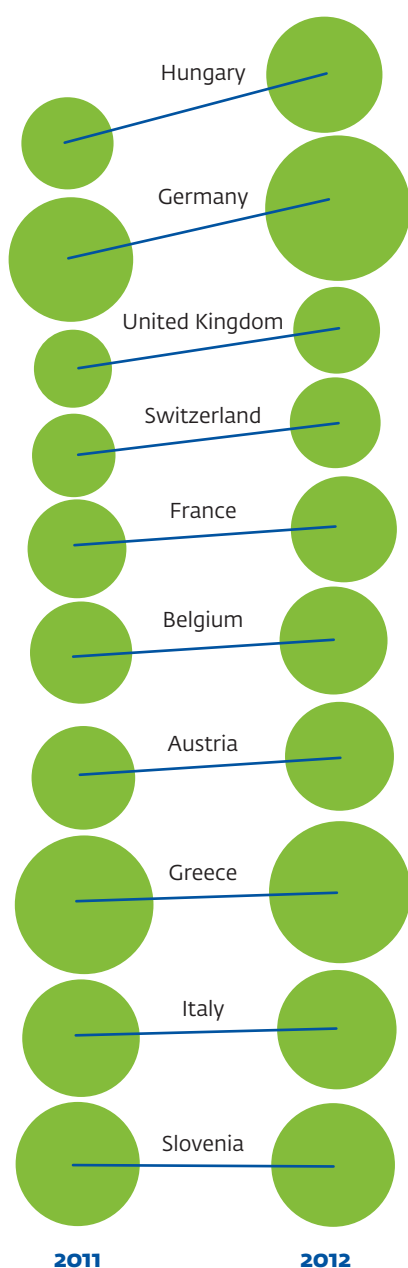
On the other hand, Member States and Schengen Associated Countries refused entry to 21% fewer nationals from the five visa-exempt countries compared to 2011. More than 85% of all refusals were issued by only four neighbouring Member States; Greece (-26%, mostly Albanians), Hungary (-6%, mostly Serbs), Slovenia (-7%, mostly Serbs and Bosnia-Herzegovina) and Italy (-37% mostly Albanians).

More precisely, the decreasing trend was largely linked to reason H of the Schengen borders code (SIS alert issued) and was associated mostly with Albanian nationals (from 10 355 in 2011 to 6030 during 2012). Exit refusals by the Western Balkan countries were likely adding to this decreasing trend of entry refusals in the neighbouring Member States.

Illegal stay

Combined, nationals from the Western Balkans amounted to 10% (or 31 500) of the total EU detections for illegal stay during 2012 (or 307 600*). The same share stood at 8.7% during 2011, indicating thus that Western Balkan nationals were among the top nation-

Figure 20. **Bubble chart is showing comparison between detections of illegal stay by Member States and Schengen Associated Countries during 2012 and 2011**



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013

alities whose detections for illegal stay in Member States increased the most. More precisely, during 2012 there were almost 22% more illegal stayers from the Western Balkans detected in the EU compared to 2011. This trend was quite the opposite to the overall EU trend given that the number of detections of illegal stay across all Member States and Schengen Associated Countries decreased by almost 5% during 2012 (see Fig. 20).

Distribution by Member States and Schengen Associated Countries

More than half of all illegal stayers from the Western Balkans were detected by only four Member States: Germany, Greece, Slovenia and Italy. Apart from Slovenia, all other top ten Member States and Schengen Associated Countries all reported increasing numbers compared to 2011. Germany became the top reporting country given that detections there rose by 59% compared to 2011. The trend was by and large linked to persons from the territory of Kosovo and to lesser extent also from Serbia. Hungary, however, reported the single largest relative increase of 92%, largely due to Serbian nationals.

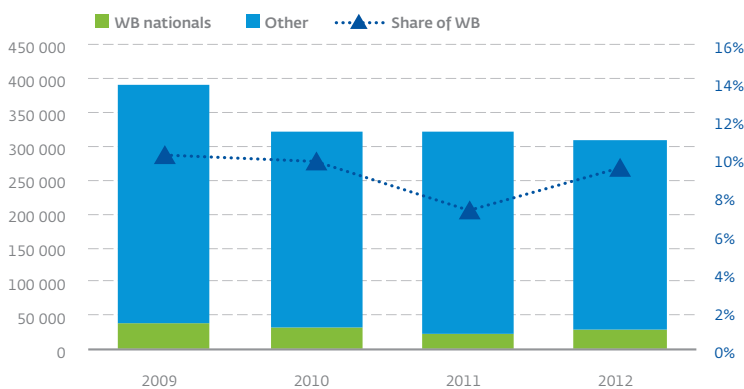
Distribution by Western Balkan nationalities

Unsurprisingly therefore, apart from nationals of Croatia, all other Western Balkan nationalities demonstrated moderate to significant increasing trends compared to 2011. Albanian and Serb nationals were by far the most commonly detected nationalities. As indicated in Figure 21 their number rose by the same 21% margin compared to 2011.

Greece and Italy reported more than 60% of all illegal stayers as coming from Albania (traditional circular labour migration), however, most of the increasing trend was due to rising numbers in the UK, Belgium, Germany and Slovenia. This observation largely confirms initial assumptions that visa liber-



Figure 21. Among nationalities detected for staying illegally, Syrians, Pakistanis and Albanians increased the most between 2011 and 2012. Western Balkan nationals combined constituted 10% of all detected illegal stayers in the EU during 2012



Source: FRAN data as of 18 February 2013

alisation could lead to diversification of migratory choices made by would-be illegal migrants from Albania.

Serbian nationals were detected for illegal stay predominantly by Germany and Hungary. In both Member States detections rose by 42% and 87%, respectively. Elsewhere in the EU, illegal stay detections of Serb nationals either decreased or remained largely at 2011 levels.

By far the largest increase compared to 2011 was associated with persons from the territory of Kosovo (12% share of the total for the Western Balkans) whose detections for illegal stay rose by 62%. The increase was despite the fact that Kosovo is the only territory in the Western Balkans for which Member States and Schengen Associated Countries still request visas. Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Belgium were affected the most.

4.2.3. Document fraud

Document fraud in the Western Balkans is linked to three separate phenomena. The

first and by far the largest is associated with attempts to cover up overstay and thus avoid SIS entry bans. The second is linked to persons from the territory of Kosovo trying to circumvent visa obligation through many diverse *modi operandi* while the last one is a function of secondary movements of migrants en route from Greece to other Member States and Schengen Associated Countries.

Detections in Member States and Schengen Associated Countries: EU perspective

According to EDF-RAN data, in 2012 there were nearly 8 000 detections of migrants using fraudulent documents to illegally enter the EU/Schengen area from third countries, which is a substantial increase compared to previous years. Much of this increase was due to higher pressure at the external border in terms of migrants using, inter alia, counterfeit stamps or forged passports to illegally enter

European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network

Despite the recognised seriousness of document fraud, until recently there was no regular or consolidated information exchange among Member States and there were no overall analyses of trends in the field of document fraud at the EU level. To address this information gap and following on from the success of an earlier pilot study, the European Union Document-Fraud Risk Analysis Network (EDF-RAN) was formed in early 2012 to serve as a platform for information exchange among Member States.

from third countries. However, at least some of the increase should probably be attributed to a gradually increased focus on consistent, well-defined reporting within the framework of the EDF-RAN and changes in reporting practise from 2011 to 2012.

Albanians were the most commonly detected for using document fraud to illegally enter the EU/Schengen area from a third country during 2012. Almost one fifth of all detections were linked to this nationality. The other top five nationalities were Syrian, Moroccan, Ukrainian and Nigerian.

In previous years, most detections were made at the major EU airports, but in 2012 there were more detections at the external land (56%) than at both the air (39%) and sea borders (5%). The reason for the switch was a massive increase in the number of Albanian nationals detected at land border between Greece and Albania, using counterfeit border-crossing stamps (see Fig. 22) to fabricate travel histories and thus attempt to extend periods of stay.

Out of almost 2 000 reported cases of counterfeited stamps, roughly 83% were Greek stamps and the rest predominantly Albanian (335). This trend, involving mostly circular migrants, would have begun in 2011 once Albanians nationals were granted visa-free access to the Schengen area.

Albanians were also increasingly detected travelling from the Schengen area to the UK and to a lesser extent to Ireland.

Detections in the Western Balkans: WB-RAN perspective

Document fraud detections by the six WB-RAN members during 2012 remained largely at levels observed in 2011. More precisely, there were 558 detections of document fraud during 2012 compared to 549

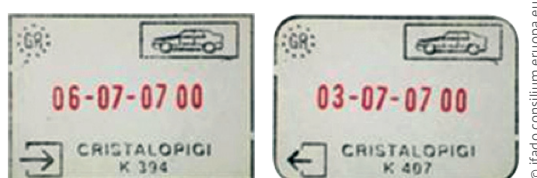


Figure 22. **In 2012, counterfeit Greek border-crossing stamps (entry and exit) were the most commonly abused document on entry to the EU/Schengen area from third countries, almost exclusively used by Albanian migrants entering Greece**

during 2011. The stable trend, however, hides significant divergence in terms of reporting country, type of documents and the main nationalities.

Reporting country, border sections

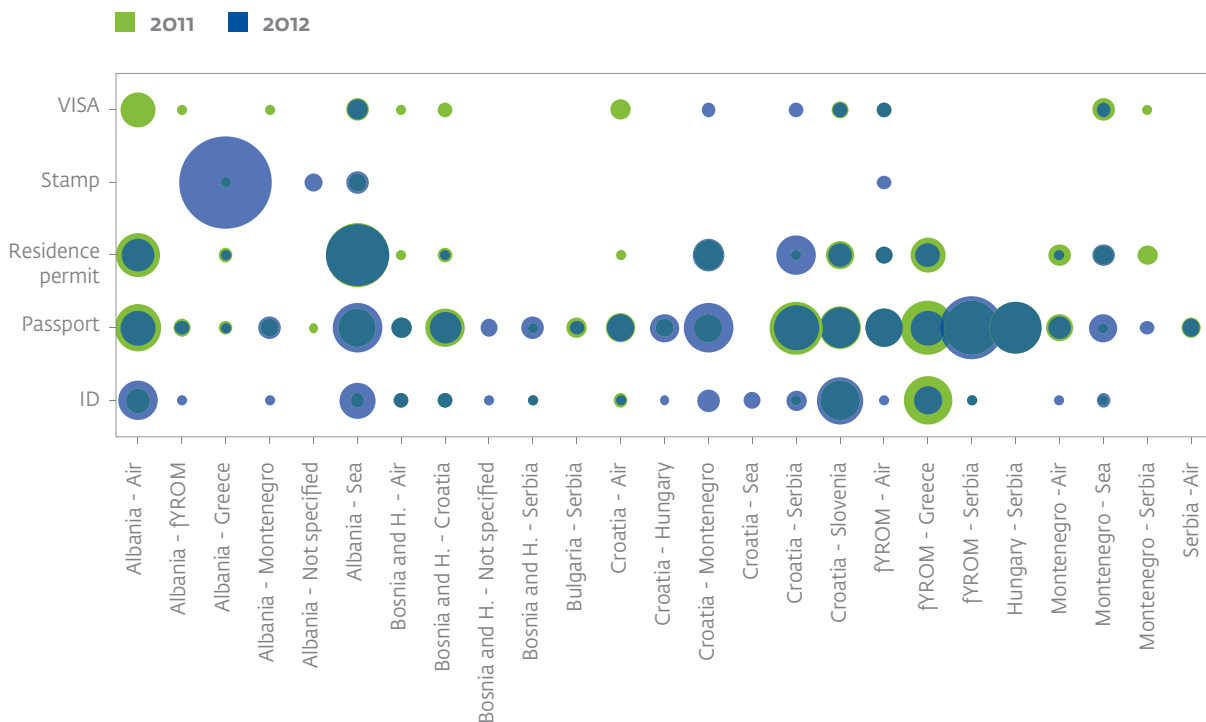
Almost 40% of all detections of document fraud in the Western Balkans region was reported by Albania only, followed by Croatia and Serbia (25% and 14% shares, respectively). With 60% increase compared to 2011, detections in Albania demonstrated by far the most pronounced upward trend. It was largely due to detections of Albanian nationals with counterfeited Greek border-crossing stamps. In fact, almost 100% detections at the Greek-Albanian border was linked to this type of fraud designed to hide overstay in Greece (more than three months in any given six months period) and thus mirroring previously described detections in Greece.

Albanian authorities were able to detect most of the fraudsters by checking entry/exit electronic data with the stamps.

Consequently, the mentioned border section was the number one in the region, followed by detections at Albanian sea border (ferries



Figure 23. Detection of document fraud by type of document and border section, comparison between 2012 (blue) and 2011 (green) shows significant declines in detection of visas and changes in trend affecting several border sections



Source: EDF-RAN data as of 18 February 2013

towards Italy) and detections by Croatia at its borders with Slovenia (see Fig. 23).

Passports

While counterfeited entry/exit stamps were the highest growing form of fraud, passports remained the most abused with almost half of the overall share in 2012. Document fraud involving passports during 2012 remained largely at 2011 levels with almost identical number of detected cases (254 in 2012 vs 245 in 2011).

Most of passport abuse involved Albanian travel documents (61), followed by those from Bulgaria (49) and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (24). In terms of passport fraudsters, most of them were

coming from the territory of Kosovo, followed by nationals of Turkey and Albania.

There was a high degree of specialisation associated with passport abuse. Namely, by and large most nationalities abuse their own national passports. The only notable exception to this rule were passport fraudsters from the territory of Kosovo who were detected with a wide variety of passports from the region itself (mostly Albanian) and several Member States (Bulgaria, Slovenia, Greece, Czech Republic, Germany, Austria).

Interestingly, WB-RAN data do not suggest any noticeable national detection bias.* More precisely, most fraudulent Albanian passports were detected by Croatia and not Albania. Likewise, passports from the former Yugo-

* National detection bias occurs when border control authorities are inclined to detect their own national documents in much greater numbers due to the fact that they are very familiar with them while not so knowledgeable on other documents.

slav Republic of Macedonia were detected more often by Albania and Serbia.

Residence permits

Detections of document fraud involving residence permits of different Member States and Schengen Associated Countries were also detected in fairly similar numbers as during 2011. There were roughly 100 detection cases, involving mostly Swiss (36), German (18), Greek (9), Italian (7) and Slovenian (7) fraudulent residence permits. In fact, residence permits from these five Member States and Schengen Associated Countries amounted to 80% share of the total detections during 2012.

As in the case of passport abuse, persons from the territory of Kosovo were detected in significant numbers. To be exact, almost 70% or 66 cases of residence permit abuse were linked to this group of illegal migrants. Their preference was clearly for Swiss residence permits (32), followed by German (15) and Slovenian (7).

More than half of all detections for residence permits was done by Albania alone, either at their sea borders (ferries to Italy) or at their air border. All detections were during exit controls when persons (mostly from Kosovo) tried

to leave Albania and enter Schengen area. Interestingly, Albania was also able to detect four cases of migrants from Syria, Pakistan and Mali trying to leave Albania on ferries to Italy by using counterfeited residence permits from Bulgaria, Greece and France. This in turn clearly indicates that migrants en route from Greece to other Member States are expanding their options for secondary movements through the Western Balkans.

Identity cards

All WB-RAN members accept identity cards issued by Member States and Schengen Associated Countries as valid travel documents for entering or exiting their territory. Relatively high number of detections of this type of documents is therefore not surprising. In fact, detections (85) rose by 30% during 2012, largely due to Albanian nationals trying to exit Albania using Italian identity cards. In addition, more Turkish nationals were trying to use Bulgarian identity cards to exit Croatia and enter the Schengen area in Slovenia.

More than three quarter of all detections were linked to ID cards from only six Member States: Italy (mostly Albanians), Greece (mostly Syrians), Bulgaria (mostly Turks), Spain (Bolivians), Romania (Tajiks) and Belgium (Kosovo).



4.3. Risk of increased smuggling of stolen vehicles, drugs and weapons across the common borders

Risk name	Risk of increased smuggling of stolen vehicles, drugs and weapons across the common borders
Threat	Smuggling of drugs, vehicles and weapons across the Western Balkan borders
Main border sections	Slovenian-Croatian border, Hungarian-Serbian border, Greek-Albanian border, Italian-Albanian sea border

4.3.1. Description of the threat

According to information gathered during JO Focal Points Land and JO Aeneas in 2012, the largest share of cross-border criminality at different Western Balkan borders relates to drug trafficking to the Member States and smuggling of stolen vehicles on exit from the EU. The smuggling of weapons has been reported less frequently, but should still be considered as a threat. In comparison with the Eastern Borders, the number of illicitly imported cigarettes detected during Frontex Joint Operations was rather low.

Stolen vehicles on exit from the EU

Compared to 2011, the overall number of stolen vehicles detected through JO Focal Points Land rose by 50%. While 369 vehicles at the external borders were found to be stolen in 2011, the number of related incidents in 2012 amounted to 512. This trend was mainly caused by 55% more detections at the Eastern Borders, but also assets deployed through Frontex at the Western Balkans registered an increase of almost one third in the number of stolen vehicles.

Thus in 2012, the second most important destination region for stolen cars and other machinery stolen from the EU shows to be the Western Balkans again.

Most of the identified cars on their way to the Western Balkan countries were reported as stolen in Italy, Germany and Slovenia.

Many crime groups organise the theft of vehicles on the basis of specific orders placed by potential buyers in their countries of origin, specifying the demanded type of the car. Particularly often detected car makes at the EU external borders in 2012 were Volkswagen with 33%, BMW with 28% and Audi with 25%.

In comparison with Eastern Borders, Mercedes Benz was rather underrepresented with only 14% of detections. Border guards deployed in JO Focal Points Land also seized vehicles registered as stolen by the authorities of Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, which shows an improved information exchange with these third countries.

Smuggling of drugs

According to Europol, the heroin smuggling routes to Europe have diversified in recent years, but the information available to Frontex shows that the Western Balkans Route is still used for the transport of the substance into Europe on a regular basis.

In 2012, border guards in cooperation with local customs officers detected a total amount of 86 kg of heroin through Frontex Joint Operations in Bulgaria, Greece, Hungary and Slovenia. Most seizures were related to single travellers who concealed smaller amounts on their bodies or in cavities of their cars. Other detections, however, showed the re-appearance of larger scale heroin shipments along the Balkan route – a phenomenon that seemed to decrease during 2011.

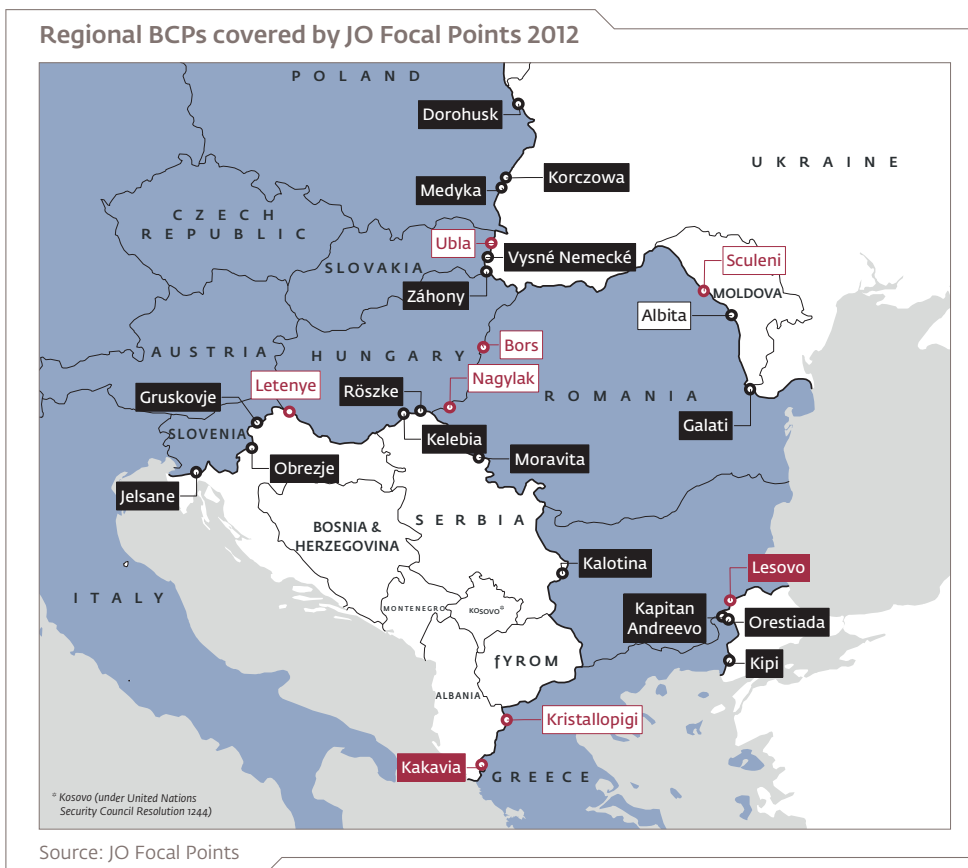


Figure 24. Selections of relevant JO Focal Points at the EU's external land border

At the beginning of August 2012, 21.8 kg of heroin were found in the tank of a Bosnian lorry during the JO Focal Points Land at the BCP Kapitan Andreevo. In November, border guards deployed under the JO Focal Points Land searched a car crossing the border from Turkey to Bulgaria and found 10.8 kg of heroin packed in 21 bags under the rear seats of the vehicle.

After entering Bulgaria and Greece from Turkey, heroin is shipped through various transit countries towards Western Europe. Facts gathered through the Western Balkans Risk Analysis Network show heroin seizures on the way from Greece to Albania and further on at the borders to Montenegro and Croatia.

According to Europol, Turkish OCGs play a strong role for the shipment of heroin to Europe, but they rely on the support of OCGs native in countries through which the substance transits, such as Serbian and Albanian groups. Storage facilities for heroin continue to exist in Albania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Kosovo. Member States also reported migrant workers returning to the EU, who transported smaller portions of heroin in busses or their private cars through the Western Balkan countries.

Also cannabis products are systematically smuggled from and through the Western Balkans. In 2012, 657 kg of marijuana was seized through Frontex Joint Operations at the bor-

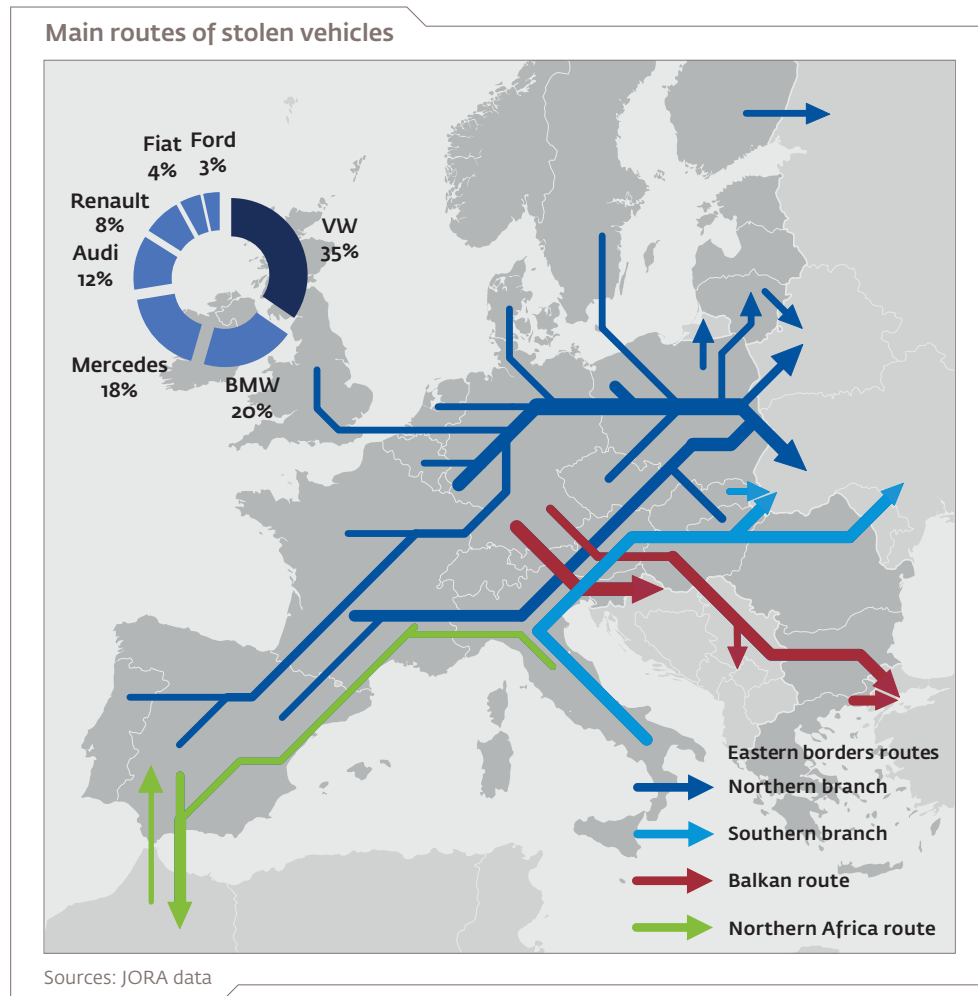


Figure 25. **The main routes for stolen vehicles in 2012**

ders to Croatia, Albania, Serbia and Turkey. The largest related shipment was detected in October 2012 at the Hungarian BCP Kelebia, when one person attempted to smuggle 492 kg of marijuana concealed under a double wall of his empty van.

Even though Albanian law enforcement managed to destroy production capacities in many rural areas, cannabis from Albania is again reported in large amounts, mainly smuggled to Greece, Italy and Macedonia. While in 2011 around 3.7 tonnes of canna-

bis herb was seized by Albanian border police, the number grew to around 10 tonnes in 2012. Also Greek and Italian authorities reported large seizures of cannabis originating from Albania. Within the JO Aeneas 2012, several boats were detected on their way to Italy carrying a total of 1 980 kg of marijuana. South East Europe is also a region of growing significance for cocaine smuggling from Latin America. According to Europol, particularly Croatia is used as an entry point for cocaine, which is mainly smuggled in sea containers.

Smuggling of weapons

The rather sporadic information received through Frontex Joint Operations on trafficking in small arms across the Western Balkan borders does not give a comprehensive picture on the overall situation and leave a substantial knowledge gap. However, individual incidents suggest certain geographically related threats and vulnerabilities. During JO Focal Points Land 2012, small firearms, ammunition and gun powder have been seized in 10 incidents, most of them at the borders to Croatia and Serbia. Nonlethal weapons such as truncheons and knuckle-dusters have been confiscated in 60 cases.

A continued flow of illicit small arms can be expected from the Western Balkan countries, where a large number of weapons are stored in private households. Greek sources report that rifles used by organised crime groups in many cases come from neighbouring Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.



Figure 26. 500 kg of marijuana and an AK-47 rifle were seized in February 2012 by the Hellenic Coast Guard on a speedboat with two 350 PS engines, which was on the way from Albania to the Greek coast

© Hellenic Coast Guard



5. Outlook

5.1. Croatia joining the EU in July 2013

Accession negotiations with Croatia were closed in June 2011. After the European Commission's favourable opinion, the European Parliament's assent and the Council decision on the admission of Croatia, the Accession Treaty was signed on 9 December 2011. Croatia has ratified the Accession Treaty and will become a Member of the EU on 1 July 2013, subject to the Accession Treaty being ratified by all Member States.

According to the main findings of the Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council Monitoring Report on Croatia's Accession Preparations of 26 March 2013*, preparations in the area of migration will be soon completed.

With regard to external borders and Schengen, legislative alignment is almost complete. The State Border Control Act and its implementing legislation were amended at the end of 2011. The Integrated Border Management (IBM) Action Plan was revised in February 2013 and a new one is being prepared in view of aligning the national concept with the EU one.

Change in the physical drawing of the external borders

Three characteristics make the Croatian land border a real challenge for control. Firstly, it is a very long border, stretching over 2 381 km. Secondly, the regular traffic at the land borders is quite significant; more than 50 million crossings (entry/exit) at the border with Slovenia alone during 2012. Thirdly, the Cro-

atian international borders, except the one with Hungary, were established quite recently over an intricate road network built without border considerations at the time of the Yugoslav Republic.

With Croatia joining the EU, the external land border of Member States of the EU will shift from the land border between Slovenia and Croatia (695 km) and Hungary and Croatia (355 km) to the land border between Croatia and Serbia (325 km), Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1 001 km) and Croatia and Montenegro (22 km), resulting in a net increase of 327 km. Combined, the borders between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro total approximately 1 377 km. Therefore, Croatia will be the Member State with the longest external land border, slightly longer than Finland (1 340 km) and Greece (1 248 km).

The border section between Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1 001 km) will be the second longest land border section, after the land border between Finland and the Russian Federation (1 340 km). This long border section crosses very diverse terrain, from small mountain ranges to urban areas.

Among all Croatian land border sections, the border between Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina is probably the most challenging for prevention of illegal border-crossing because of its length, many crossing roads and links between organised crime groups on both sides of the border.

Although Croatia has a long coastline (approx. 950 km), dotted with a large number of islands and many seaports, the changes for the external sea borders will be confined to the Adriatic Sea.

* Communication from the European Commission to the European Parliament and the Council, Monitoring Report on Croatia's accession preparations, Brussels, 26 3 2013, COM (2013) 171 Final

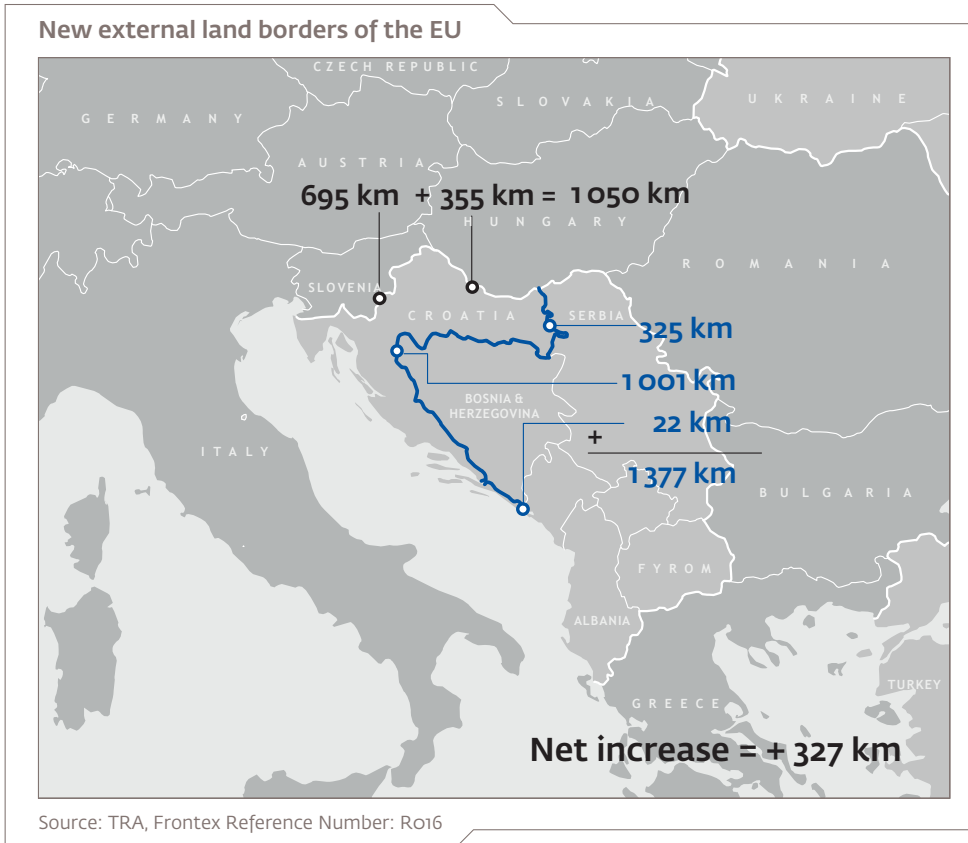


Figure 27. **Changes of the external borders of the EU after Croatia becomes a full member**

Croatia is not yet joining the Schengen area and border control will continue to operate between Croatia and Slovenia. Therefore, Croatia's EU membership will only have moderate impact on the main routes used by irregular migrants.

5.2. Visa safeguard clause instrument

The proposal for the so-called visa safeguard clause (amending Council Regulation (EC) No 539/2001) is not only about adding the safeguard clause which should allow for a rapid, temporary suspension of the visa waiver for a third country in case of an emergency situation. It also aims at:

- modifying certain provisions, e.g. of the reciprocity mechanism, in order to have

them fully comply with the respective provisions of the TFEU;

- ensuring compliance with Council Regulation (EC) No 810/2009 establishing a Community Code on visas (Visa Code) applicable since 5 April 2010 by providing e.g. for appropriate definitions concerning short stay and visa;
- ensuring that, in accordance with Article 77(2)(a) of the TFEU, the Regulation determines exhaustively whether a third-country national is to be subject to or exempt from the visa requirement and thus providing legal certainty, by complementing the rules applicable to refugees and stateless persons in order to clarify the applicable visa regime for those residing in the UK or in Ireland;



- making progress towards a full harmonisation of the common visa policy by providing for new, more harmonised rules with regard to the visa requirement or exemption applicable to various categories of third-country nationals;
- providing for clear rules as regards the visa requirement/exemption for holders of laissez-passez and different passports issued by certain entities subject to international law, but which do not qualify as international intergovernmental organisations;
- adopting new provision in respect of obligations for certain Member States flowing from prior EU/international agreements implying the need to derogate from the common visa rules.
- As long as there is no agreement on all the listed elements of the proposal, safeguard clause is not going to come in force.

There are also some divergences between Member States regarding the reciprocity mechanism. In practical terms this means that possible reintroduction of visa obligation using the clause means cannot happen before early 2014 (given the procedure described in the proposal).

5.3. Visa liberalisation process with Kosovo

Kosovo remains the only region in the Western Balkans that is still excluded from the visa-free travel arrangements. At the end of 2011, the Council reaffirmed that Kosovo would benefit from the perspective of eventual visa liberalisation once all conditions are met and without prejudice to Member States' position on status.

Against this background and taking into account the Council's requirements expressed in various Council conclusions, as well as the result of numerous expert missions and meetings, the European Commission launched visa dialogue with Kosovo during January 2012.

The roadmap for visa liberalisation with Kosovo was presented by the European Commission in June 2012. In this framework, Kosovo was requested first to adopt or amend the legislation in line with the EU *acquis* and as set out in the roadmap. Kosovo is also expected to fully implement the new legislation and all other measures specified in the roadmap document.

The visa liberalisation roadmap addresses four sets of issues: document security; border/boundary and migration management; public order and security; and fundamental rights related to the freedom of movement.

Kosovo authorities are expected to improve their capacity to perform border check and surveillance through enhanced use risk analysis and explore modalities to cooperate with Frontex in this regard.

5.4. Home Affairs during the next Multi-annual Financial Framework

According to the European Commission's proposal, the number of funds in home affairs during the new Multi-annual Financial Framework (period 2014–2020) will be reduced from the current four to only two: Migration and Asylum Fund and an Internal Security Fund.

Both funds will have an external dimension ensuring continuity of financing, starting in the EU and continuing in third countries. There will also be a common regulatory framework for both funds.

The main innovation of the Internal Security Fund regarding external borders of the EU and common visa policy are several, including financing of wider scope of actions based on the four tiers access model and support to actions in third countries to further EU's interests.

6. Conclusions

The Western Balkans has gone through rapid and significant changes regarding irregular migration trends following the introduction of visa-free travel arrangements with Member States and Schengen Associated Countries. In terms of illegal border-crossing, the region has transitioned from largely a source to mostly transit area given the rapid expansion of secondary movements between Greece and other Member States through the Western Balkans during 2011 and 2012.

The preceding assessment shows that for the second year running, Western Balkan regional border security is affected the most by the flow of migrants en route from Greece towards other Member States. This observation is firmly corroborated by the individual assessments made by all six Western Balkan countries.

Regardless of the uncertainties related to the sustainability of the operational measures in Greece, large irregular movements through the western Balkans are considered as almost certain.

While phenomena such as abuse of legal travel channels (asylum misuse, document fraud or illegal stay) by Western Balkan nationals continue, the capacity of border-control authorities to mitigate these threats remains fairly limited. In fact, large majority of persons who subsequently submit unfounded asylum application or overstay fulfil all requirements to legally cross into the EU.

The detailed descriptions of each risk in the annual risk assessment chapter should provide the reader with a better understanding

of the measures that are required to address the issues effectively.

Furthermore, all identified risks affect both the Western Balkan countries and Member States. Therefore, they are undoubtedly linked to strategic priorities mentioned in 'EU Action on Migratory Pressures – A Strategic Response'.*

The EU Action on Migratory Pressures was approved under the Danish Presidency by the JHA Council in April 2012.

The EU Action is organised under a number of Strategic Priorities:

- I. Strengthening cooperation with third countries of transit and origin on migration management;
- II. Enhanced border management at the external borders;
- III. Preventing illegal immigration via the Greek-Turkish Border;
- IV. Better tackling of abuse of legal migration channels;
- V. Safeguarding and protecting free movement by prevention of abuse by third country nationals;
- VI. Enhancing migration management including cooperation on return practices.

The strategic priorities should be updated on a regular basis or at least twice a year, also taking into account relevant assessments and risk analysis of Frontex. This Western Balkans Annual Risk Analysis and other relevant annual risk analysis products of Frontex should therefore be seen as giving indicative directions for this review process.

** EU Action on migratory pressure - A strategic response (8714/1/12), Brussels, 23 April 2012*



7. Statistical annex

Explanatory note:

Detections reported by Member States for illegal border-crossing between BCPs, illegal border-crossing at BCPs and refusals of entry are detections/refusals at the common land borders on entry only. For facilitators, detections at the common land borders on entry and exit are included. For Illegal stay, only detections at the common land borders on exit are included. For asylum, all applications (land, sea, air and inland) are included.

For WB-RAN countries, all indicators – save for refusals of entry – include detections/applications on exit and entry at land, sea and air borders.

Each section of the table (reporting country, border type, place of detection, top five border sections and top ten nationalities) refers to total detections reported by WB-RAN countries and to neighbouring land border detections reported by Member States.

LEGEND

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

Source: WB-RAN and FRAN data as of 12 March 2012, unless otherwise indicated

Note: 'Member States' in the tables refer to FRAN Member States, including both 27 EU Member States and three Schengen Associated Countries

Annex Table 1. **Illegal border-crossing between BCPs**

Detections by border type and top ten nationalities

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total
Border Type					
Land	62 914	26 224	34 827	33	100
Sea	51	20	12	-40	0
Top Ten Nationalities					
Afghanistan	2 498	7 369	8 065	9.4	23
Albania	53 078	6 671	6 602	-1	19
Pakistan	202	3 331	5 033	51	14
Algeria	217	1 026	3 029	195	8.7
Somalia	375	617	2 000	224	5.7
Syria	37	92	1 646	1 689	4.7
Morocco	128	702	1 361	94	3.9
Kosovo*	508	697	1 287	85	3.7
Serbia	1 012	848	747	-12	2.1
Palestine	1 621	794	595	-25	1.7
Others	3 289	4 097	4 474	9.2	13
Total	62 965	26 244	34 839	33	100

Annex Table 2. **Illegal border-crossing at BCPs**

Detections by border type and top ten nationalities

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total
Border Type					
Land	943	1 196	2 071	73	87
Sea	195	176	302	72	13
Air	187	49	14	-71	0.6
Top Ten Nationalities					
Afghanistan	125	474	754	59	32
Pakistan	9	163	193	18	8.1
Kosovo*	162	106	145	37	6.1
Serbia	136	97	145	49	6.1
Syria	5	7	144	1 957	6
Algeria	1	18	105	483	4.4
Albania	234	50	85	70	3.6
Italy	30	61	83	36	3.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	57	34	76	124	3.2
Turkey	164	80	61	-24	2.6
Others	402	331	596	80	25
Total	1 325	1 421	2 387	68	100

* 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

Annex Table 3. **Facilitators**

Detections by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total
Place of Detection					
Land	928	695	764	9.9	75
Inland	20	90	240	167	24
Sea	9	9	10	11	1
Air	9	1	2	100	0.2
Not specified		1	0	-100	0
Top Ten Nationalities					
Serbia	199	296	352	19	35
Albania	310	125	137	9.6	13
Bosnia and Herzegovina	25	40	82	105	8.1
Slovenia	91	27	79	193	7.8
Croatia	63	45	74	64	7.3
fYROM	40	44	54	23	5.3
Turkey	28	11	31	182	3.1
Kosovo*	16	30	31	3.3	3.1
Not specified	17	9	21	133	2.1
Greece	81	33	17	-48	1.7
Others	96	136	138	1.5	14
Total	965	796	1 016	28	100

* 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

Annex Table 4. **Illegal stay**

Detections by place of detection and top ten nationalities

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total
Place of Detection					
Land	2 616	9 857	11 634	18	57
Inland	8 394	9 009	8 221	-8.7	40
Not specified	906	748	669	-11	3.3
Top Ten Nationalities					
Afghanistan	885	4 346	3 283	-24	16
Serbia	1 807	2 873	3 264	14	16
Pakistan	61	1 290	1 162	-9.9	5.7
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1 214	1 124	1 144	1.8	5.6
Croatia	1 280	1 484	1 139	-23	5.5
fYROM	973	1 122	1 084	-3.4	5.3
Albania	1 079	443	1 047	136	5.1
Algeria	146	480	922	92	4.5
Syria	24	84	834	893	4.1
Iraq	116	726	809	11	3.9
Others	4 331	5 642	5 836	3.4	28
Total	11 916*	19 614	20 524	4.6	100

* Total does not include detections from Greece.

Annex Table 5. **Refusals of entry**

Refusals by border type and top ten nationalities

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total
Place of Detection					
Land	57 752	57 743	46 921	-19	94
Air	2 380	3 214	2 733	-15	5.5
Sea	221	224	160	-29	0.3
Not specified	0	0	0	n.a.	0
Top Ten Nationalities					
Albania	4 841	10 984	9 113	-17	18
Serbia	9 669	9 278	7 496	-19	15
Bosnia and Herzegovina	10 398	9 361	7 421	-21	15
Croatia	5 192	4 776	4 842	1.4	9.7
Turkey	3 536	3 478	2 897	-17	5.8
fYROM	4 240	3 196	2 558	-20	5.1
Kosovo*	1 106	2 123	2 340	10	4.7
Not specified	1 197	945	1 135	20	2.3
Germany	1 977	1 346	940	-30	1.9
Russian Federation	1 387	1 414	859	-39	1.7
Others	16 810	14 280	10 213	-28	21
Total	60 353	61 181	49 814	-19	100

* 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

Annex Table 6. Applications for asylum

Applications by top ten nationalities

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total
Top Ten Nationalities					
Pakistan	2 904	2 923	3 435	18	17
Afghanistan	1 988	2 774	3 031	9.3	15
Algeria	188	725	1 979	173	9.7
Syria	276	639	1 415	121	6.9
Bangladesh	1 009	648	1 141	76	5.6
Georgia	1 272	1 195	914	-24	4.5
Morocco	140	570	780	37	3.8
Iraq	959	774	736	-4.9	3.6
Somalia	282	406	656	62	3.2
Albania	700	281	396	41	1.9
Others	6 357	5 746	5 968	3.9	29
Total	16 075	16 681	20 451	23	100

Annex Table 7. Applications for asylum

Applications in EU Member States by Western Balkan nationals

	2011	% of total EU	% of total EU visa free	2012	% of total EU	% of total EU visa free	% change
Serbia*	12 416	4.9%	55%	15 940	5.9%	47%	28%
fYROM	4 583	1.8%	20%	7 084	2.6%	21%	55%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2 101	0.8%	9.3%	4 781	1.8%	14%	128%
Albania	2 043	0.8%	9.0%	4 270	1.6%	13%	109%
Montenegro	391	0.2%	1.7%	811	0.3%	2.4%	107%
Total	21 534	8.5%	95%	32 886	12%	97%	53%

* Includes only persons reported as Serbian and not the ones reported as Kosovo



Annex Table 8. **Document fraud**

Document fraud by place of detection, type of document and country of issuance

	2010	2011	2012	% change on prev. year	% of total	Highest share
Place of Detection						Nationality
Land	492	330	369	12	66	Albania (33%)
Sea	160	82	106	29	19	Kosovo* (55%)
Air	187	137	83	-39	15	Albania (30%)
Type of Document						Nationality
Passport	:	245	254	3.7	46	Kosovo* (19%)
Residence permit	:	111	97	-13	17	Kosovo* (68%)
Stamp	:	4	96	2300	17	Albania (98%)
ID card	:	57	85	49	15	Albania (18%)
Visa	:	37	14	-62	2.5	Kosovo* (86%)
Unknown	839	95	12	-87	2.2	Albania (42%)
Top Ten Nationalities						Nationality
Albania	226	79	157	99	28	Albania (78%)
Kosovo*	184	123	134	8.9	24	Albania (49%)
Serbia	130	95	59	-38	11	Serbia (46%)
Turkey	67	80	48	-40	8.6	Croatia (42%)
fYROM	70	25	24	-4	4.3	Serbia (50%)
Bulgaria	6	6	12	100	2.2	Serbia (75%)
Syria	1	1	11	1000	2	Croatia (45%)
Bosnia and Herzegovina	22	5	10	100	1.8	Croatia (60%)
Greece	3	9	9	0	1.6	fYROM (78%)
Nigeria	3	4	9	125	1.6	Montenegro (44%)
Others	127	122	85	-30	15	Croatia (39%)
Top Ten Countries of Issuance						Nationality
Greece	:	40	113	183	20	Albania (79%)
Albania	:	57	82	44	15	Albania (60%)
Bulgaria	:	45	65	44	12	Turkey (25%)
Switzerland	:	38	39	2.6	7	Kosovo* (87%)
Germany	:	46	29	-37	5.2	Kosovo* (72%)
Italy	:	24	28	17	5	Albania (46%)
fYROM	:	17	28	65	5	fYROM (57%)
Slovenia	:	17	22	29	3.9	Kosovo* (45%)
Turkey	:	41	21	-49	3.8	Turkey (100%)
France	:	14	14	0	2.5	Kosovo* (21%)
Others	839	210	117	-44	21	Kosovo* (19%)
Total	839	549	558	1.6	100	

* 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



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