

Crime prevention policy	
EU- priority	Illegal migrant smuggling
Country	Greece
Year	2017-2018

1. Overview of the field

Definition of Illegal migrant smuggling

1. The facilitation of entry or exit from the Hellenic territory of third-country nationals without performance of the checks stipulated in the law 4251/2014. If the act was carried out with a view to making a profit or by profession or habit, or if two (2) or more persons acted jointly, the above shall be sentenced to at least ten (10) years of imprisonment and a fine of fifty thousand (50 000) euros as a minimum.

2. The facilitation of illegal stay of a third-country national or obstruction of the investigations of police authorities to locate, apprehend and deport such national.

3. A person who illegally holds or uses genuine passport or other travel document of another person shall be sentenced to at least six (6) months of imprisonment and a fine of three thousand (3 000) euros as a minimum. The same sentence shall be imposed on any person that withholds the passport or other travel document of another person or refuses to hand it over to the competent authority. Further, the same penalty shall be imposed to any person that holds or uses a fake passport or other travel document.

8. The manager of the travel agency or immigration office, or any other person who submits to the competent authority supporting documents for the issue of a travel document for the account of a third person, stating details that do not correspond to the identification particulars of that person, shall be sentenced to at least one (1) year of imprisonment and a fine of ten thousand (10 000) euros as a minimum. The same penalty shall also be imposed to the person for whose account the supporting documents were submitted.

Assessment of trends and developments

The illegal migration phenomena is affecting Greece both at the sea and land borders, with the majority of the migrants entering through the Eastern Mediterranean route. The OCG's located in Turkey arrange their transportation to Greece by various vessel types, depending on the proximity to the shore and the amount of money paid to the smuggler. In a few occasions, the migrants are transported directly to Italy.

The illegally gained profit of the smuggling groups is being transferred through the "HAWALA" method and the groups receive extra profit by charging commission on every money transfer.

At the Greek-Turkish land borders, the migrants cross the Evros River from unguarded areas and reach Greece. From there, they arrange their transfer, with the help of facilitators, in order to reach Athens, Thessaloniki or another city. Their transfer is usually been done by bus or by vehicles that have hidden compartments in order to avoid Police checks. The OCG's take advantage of the bad conditions of the migrants-refugees and take over their transportation from the borders to the safe houses and then organize their travel to Central or Northern Europe.

The communication with the smugglers is usually been done through social media platforms or with the use of internet applications in order to avoid been detected by the authorities. What's App, Viber, Imo, Facebook are the most common of them.

The use of forged travel documents is also very common practice and is rising mainly due to the measures implemented by the Greek authorities to avoid exit from the hot spot islands and the country in general but also due to the closure of the Balkan route. This resulted into the forcing activities of OCG's, based mainly in Athens, that produce big amount of forged documents at illegal print shops that possess high quality printing equipment. Apart from that, stolen or forged travel documents are being shipped to Greece from other European countries via courier services or they are brought from Albania. Nationalities involved in forging of documents are: Albanians, Bangladeshi, and Irani, while the price of the document varies depending on their country of origin.

The majority of the OCGS smuggling migrants to Greece is located in Turkey. In Greece, the main ones are located in Athens and Thessaloniki and they can be of different nationalities, mainly Afghanis, Iraqis, Syrian or Iranis. They usually have an organized structure with head of OCG, facilitators, drivers, recruiters, forgers. They are active at areas where there is gathering of migrants, like the center of Athens and Thessaloniki, at the Aegean islands that have a proximity with Turkey and close or inside the reception centers. In order to lure the migrants and advertise their activity they use recruiters that seek the possible "clients" at certain restaurants, local shops or at the reception centers and sometimes internet applications or social media.

In most of the cases, forgers have an important role who can be members or associates of the OCG's and have illegal print office where they save the documents to be sold.

The operation methods depends on the route that will be followed. In case of smuggling by air, migrants are provided with the travel documents and the tickets and they can be accompanied till the airport or, sometimes, throughout the travel in order to assist them and not drive the attention of the authorities.

In case of air or sea smuggling, the migrants are usually gathered and kept in safe houses for some days till the preparations are completed. Then, the migrants are embarked on vehicles and driven to isolated areas of the external borders or to remote areas from where they can embark on a vessel and travel to Italy. During the journey forerunner cars are used to inform of the presence of police

Recent overview of statistics and research

ARRESTED MIGRANT SMUGGLERS IN THE COUNTRY BY POLICE AND COASTGUARD

A/A	NATIONALITIES	2017
1	OTHER	253
2	SYRIA	225
3	GREECE	223
4	PAKISTAN	180

5	ALBANIA	145
6	BULGARIA	107
7	TURKEY	87
8	IRAQ	59
9	AFGANISTAN	55
10	UCRAINE	52
11	PALESTINE	13
TOTAL		1.399

**ARRESTED MIGRANT SMUGGLERS IN THE COUNTRY
BY POLICE AND COASTGUARD**

A/A	NATIONALISTIES	2018
1	SYRIA	335
2	PAKISTAN	204
3	GREECE	199
4	ALBANIA	125
5	IRAQ	104
6	BULGARIA	103
7	AFHANISTAN	91
8	TURKEY	88
9	UCRAINE	45
10	PALESTINE	40
11	OTHER	319
TOTAL		1.653

2. Crime strategy and coordination

Objectives of the crime strategy

1. Dismantling of migrant smuggling organized groups.
2. Target organized crime groups and their activities that have significant impact in the society, paying specific attention in the arrest of leading members of the groups.
3. Detect and recover the assets been obtained through this organized crime activity.
4. Improve and update the investigative measures and the methods for collecting and analyzing operational data.
5. Fight against corruption.

Role of prevention in the crime strategy on state/regional/local level

Prevention consists 50% of the crime strategy, while the rest 50% is the repression. Prevention strategies can be separated between specific police or non-police measures with the aim to deter the perpetrators from committing the crime and training strategies of the law enforcement staff with the aim to implement police tactics that have effect on stopping the perpetrators before committing the crime.

Implementation of the policy (which level is responsible for the implementation and how is the implementation coordinated?)

The implementation is coordinated by the Headquarters of the Hellenic Police through six month evaluation of the implemented strategies and the results of the previous year activity. The evaluation is performed through direct meetings of the hierarchy and the General Regional Police Directors of the country and also, throughout the year by the responsible Police Divisions of the Police Headquarters. The responsibility of the implementation lies on the operational Divisions at regional and local level.

Stakeholders (working groups, specialised agencies, partners, etc)

The relevant stakeholders at national level are:

1. The Hellenic Police
 - i. Borders Protection Division
 - ii. Aliens Divisions of Attica and Thessaloniki
 - iii. Organized Crime and Human Trafficking Divisions of Athens and Thessaloniki.
 - iv. Police Divisions at local level.
2. The Hellenic Coastguard.

Participation in European/ international networks, working groups, etc.

Participation to a high variety of European and international networks and working groups.

3. Good practices

Overview of recent good practices, prevention programs, etc.

The close cooperation, not only with law enforcement nationally or internationally but also with the private sector whose services can be used by the migrant smugglers, are examples of good practices that can be mentioned in this regard.

This consists of a wide variety of actors dealing with financial issues (banks, money transfer services), telecommunication issues (telephone companies, internet providers, social media companies), transportation issues (private companies, railways, removal companies, courier and post services).

Finally, a series of prevention programs, designed not only by law enforcement agencies but also, other relevant actors such as social service institutes, universities or municipalities.