



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 5 March 2024  
(OR. en)

6692/24  
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LIMITE

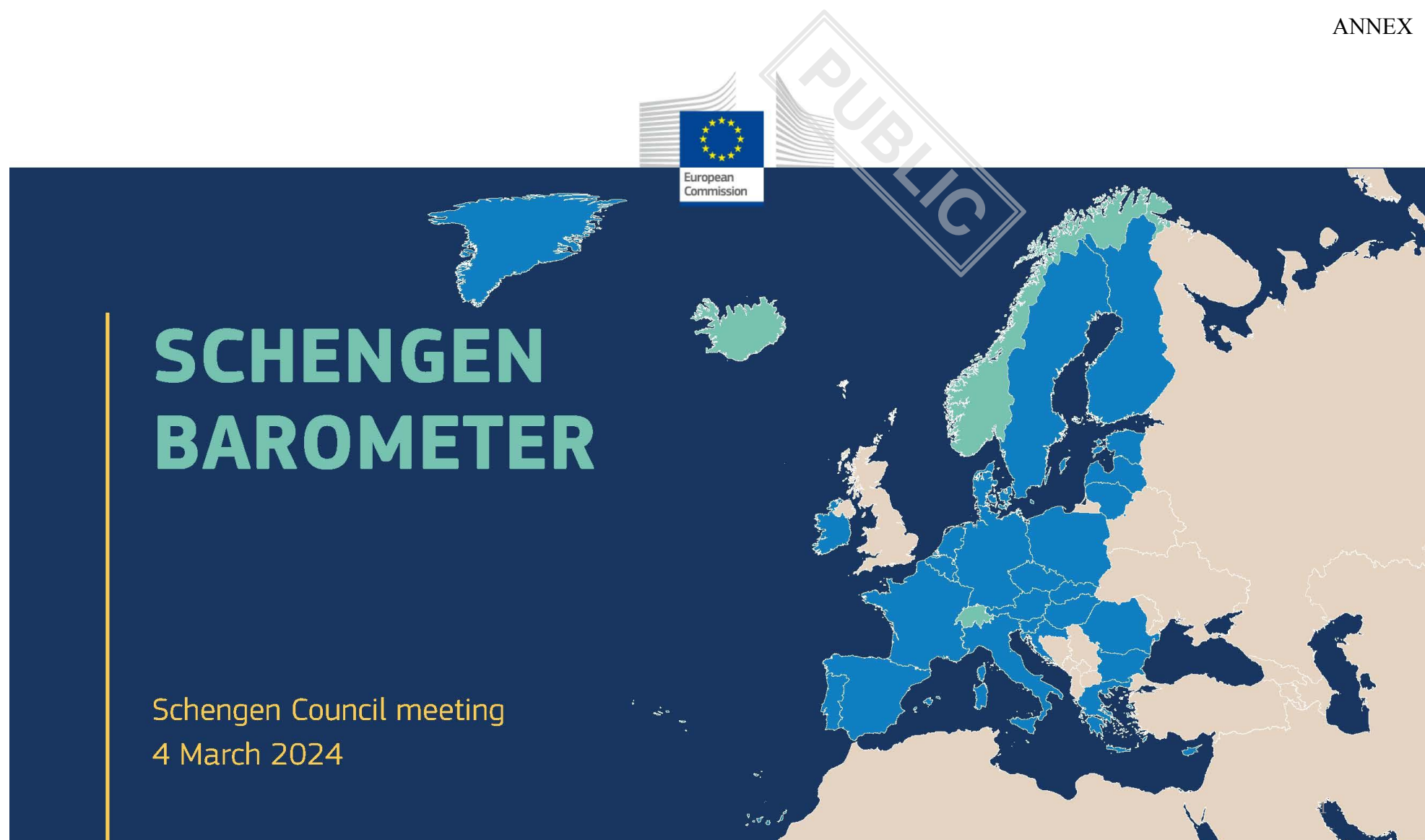
SCH-EVAL 40  
SCHENGEN 12  
COMIX 89  
JAI 289  
FRONT 60  
MIGR 83  
ASIM 21  
ENFOPOL 90  
IXIM 64  
VISA 25

#### NOTE

From:	Services of the Commission
To:	Delegations
No. prev. doc.:	6692/24
Subject:	Overall state of the Schengen area – Schengen Barometer + - Main takeaways

**DOCUMENT PARTIALLY ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC (24.04.2024)**

Delegations will find in Annex the main takeaways of the *Schengen Barometer* + provided by the Commission, as presented by Commissioner Johansson at the Schengen Council meeting on 4 March 2024.



## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OF 2023



A historic decision towards a **complete Schengen area**



Agreement on the **Pact**, putting in place a real EU migration policy



15% more **effective returns** (100 000)



EU Roadmap to **fight drug trafficking** and organised crime

## AREAS FOR CONTINUED IMPROVEMENT IN 2024



Strengthening avenues for **legal migration**



Renewed **Visa Suspension Mechanism**



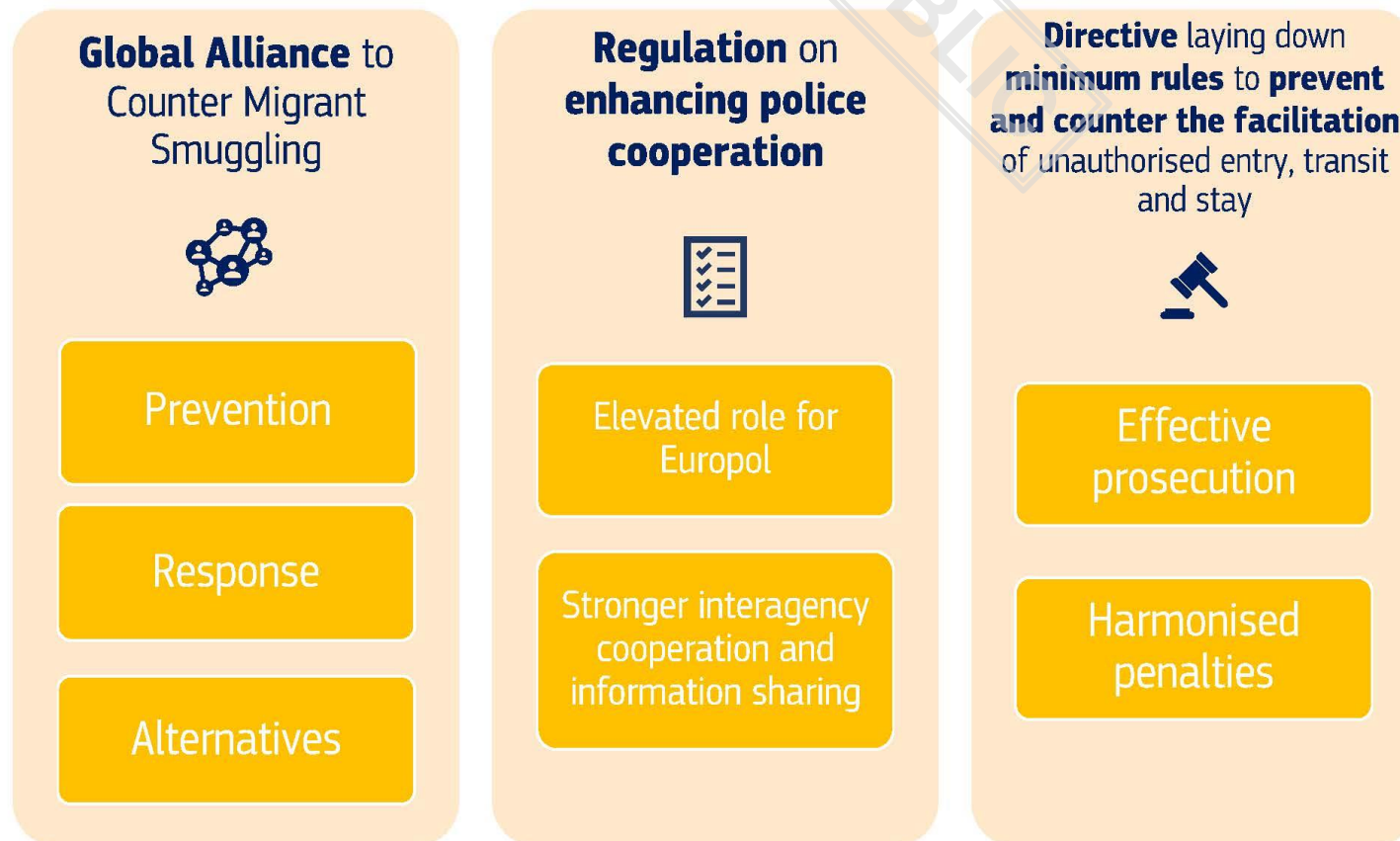
Comprehensive and reliable data for **EU situational awareness**



Launch of **Entry/Exit System**

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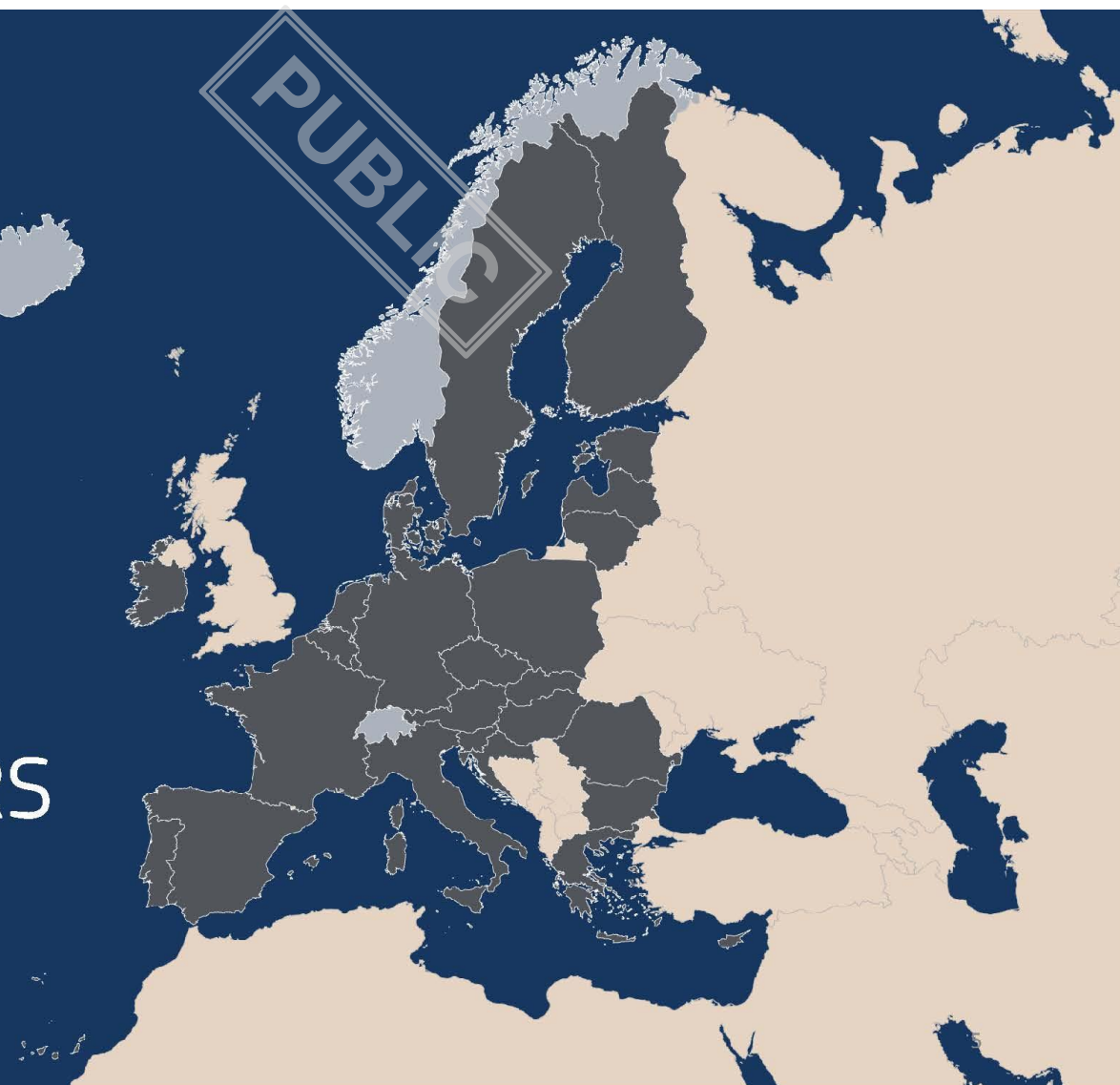
## MIGRANT SMUGGLING: EU RESPONSE



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# 1

## EXTERNAL BORDERS AND MIGRATORY IMPACT



## COMPLETING THE SCHENGEN AREA

### Bulgaria and Romania: Schengen accession from 31 March

- ✈️ Full application of Schengen *acquis* and lifting of controls (air and sea borders)
- 🚔 Launch of Regional Cooperation Initiative on police cooperation
- 👮 Increased deployments of Frontex
- 📋 Cooperation Frameworks

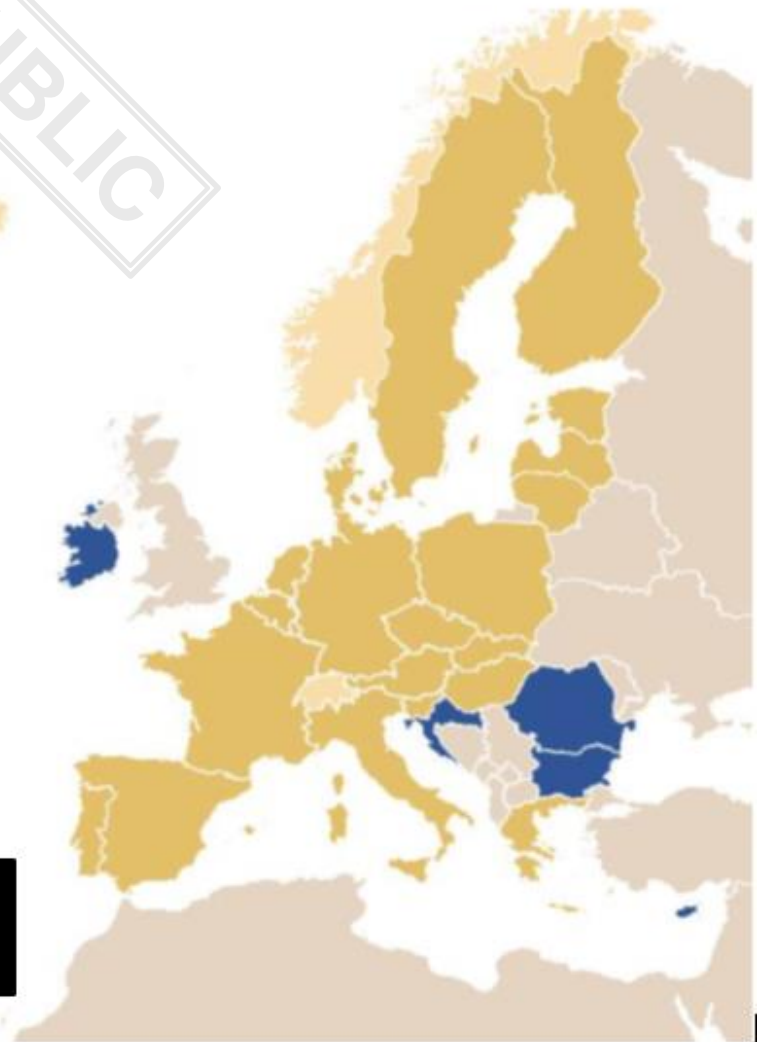
### Croatia: Schengen accession since 1 January 2023

- 🔑 Increased cooperation incl. doubled joint patrols with Slovenia
- 🚒 High migratory pressure – coordinated action.

### Ireland: first Schengen evaluation to verify readiness to participate in remaining Schengen *acquis* in 2024

- ✓ Data protection, Schengen Information System, Police cooperation

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## 01

# PROTECTION OF THE EU EXTERNAL BORDERS – JOINT MEASURES AND EU SUPPORT

### 1.1

**590**  
million

Regular border crossings  
(Frontex)

**Frontex deployments:**  
2429 staff (End of 2023)

- ✓ Positive EBCG evaluation
- ✓ Increased joint operations coordinated by Frontex
- ✓ Conclusion of new Frontex working arrangements and EU Status Agreements with third countries
- ✓ Entry into operation of the Entry/Exit System (Oct 2024)



Importance of systematic verification  
of fingerprints at external borders



Some Member States **delayed** in their preparations

Only **40%** of checks in the Visa Information  
System conducted with fingerprints (eu-LISA, 2023)

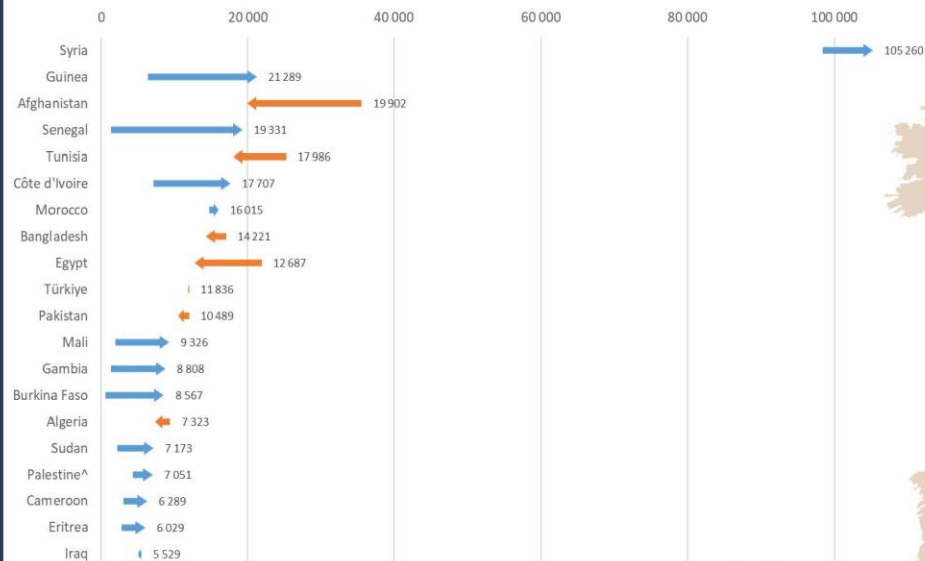
# 01

## IRREGULAR MIGRATION

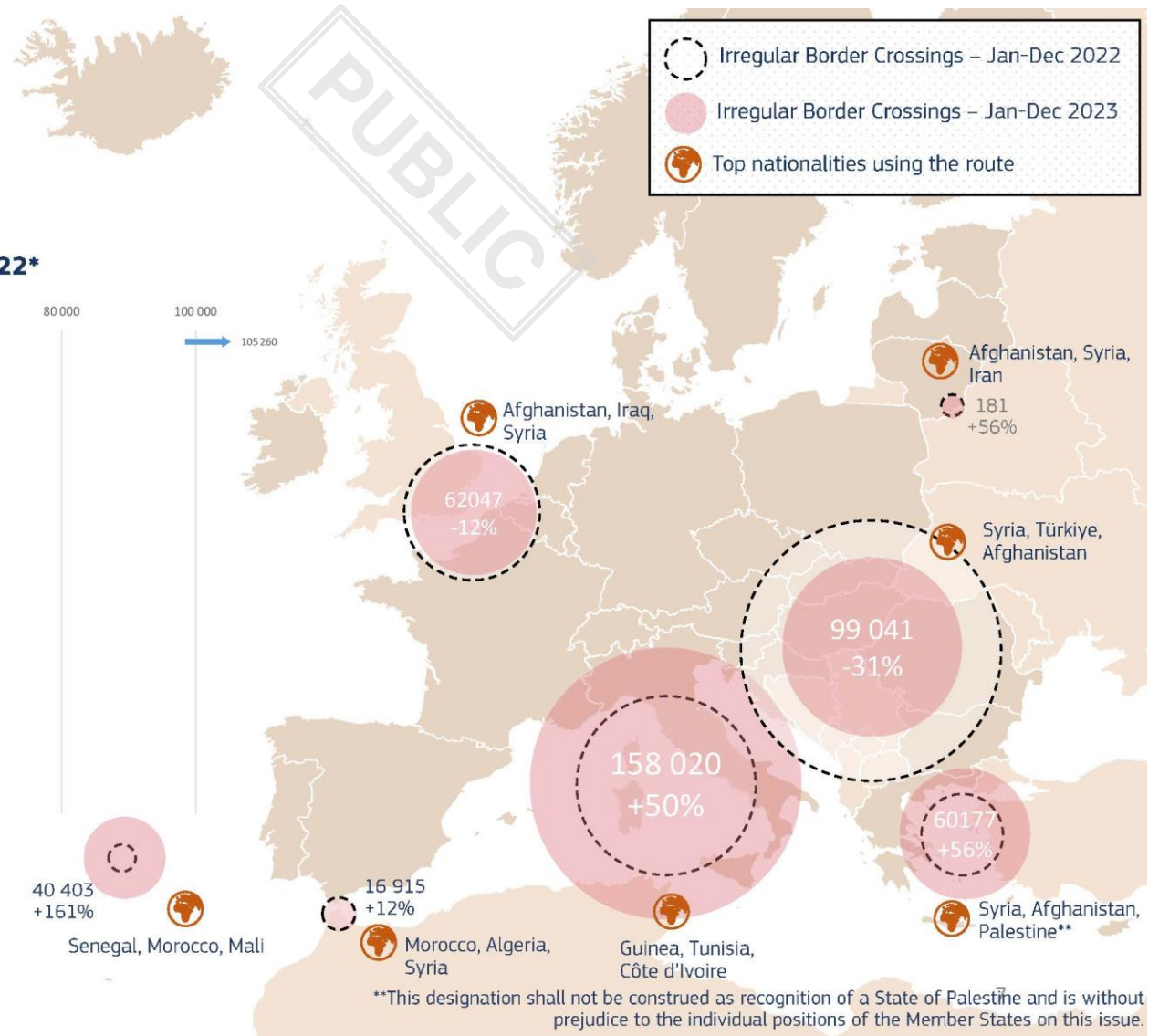
### 1.2

**380 000** Irregular border crossings  
+17%

#### Top 20 nationalities compared to 2022\*



\*Source: DG HOME, based on Frontex data; the heads of the arrows show irregular border crossings in 2023 while the tail shows crossings in 2022.





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## ASYLUM IN THE EU (2023)

1.3



**1 144 000 asylum applications**

+18%

3/4 of applications lodged in



\* Source: EUAA - Recognition rates include refugee status, subsidiary protection and national forms of protection such as humanitarian status.

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## THE SCHENGEN NEIGHBOURHOOD: DEVELOPMENTS AND ENGAGEMENT

1.4

### DEVELOPMENTS IN THIRD COUNTRIES

### EU LIAISON OFFICERS DEPLOYED IN THIRD COUNTRIES (2023)



**Key role to prevent irregular departures and enhance intelligence on security**



Increase exchange of information between national and EU Liaison Officers



Reinforce synergies for border/migration issues and for security purposes

\*This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual positions of the Member States on this issue. These departures are likely mostly on account of departures from Palestine before 7 October 2023

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## RETURNS

1.5



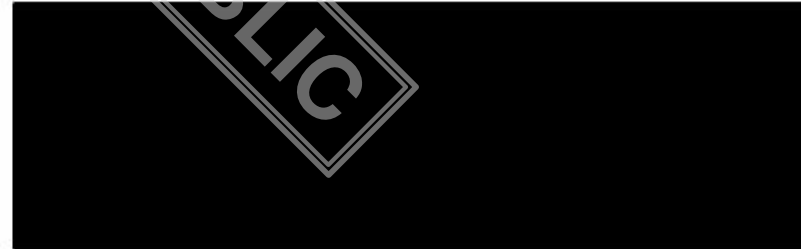
100 000  
Effective returns

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## TOWARDS A COMMON EU RETURN SYSTEM



Targeted outreach at EU level on **readmission** to priority third countries



**Voluntary return**



Over 9000 returnees supported by the Frontex Joint Reintegration Services

Action 2 Return Roadmap: Assisted voluntary return and Joint return operations with Frontex



Return of third-country nationals posing a **security threat**



Action 5 Return Roadmap: Prioritising returns of individuals posing a security threat

Practical guideline → systematic security check & special track

## TOWARDS A COMMON EU RETURN SYSTEM



Use of the **Schengen Information System** to monitor and increase returns



**Action 4 Return Roadmap:** Mutual recognition of return decisions



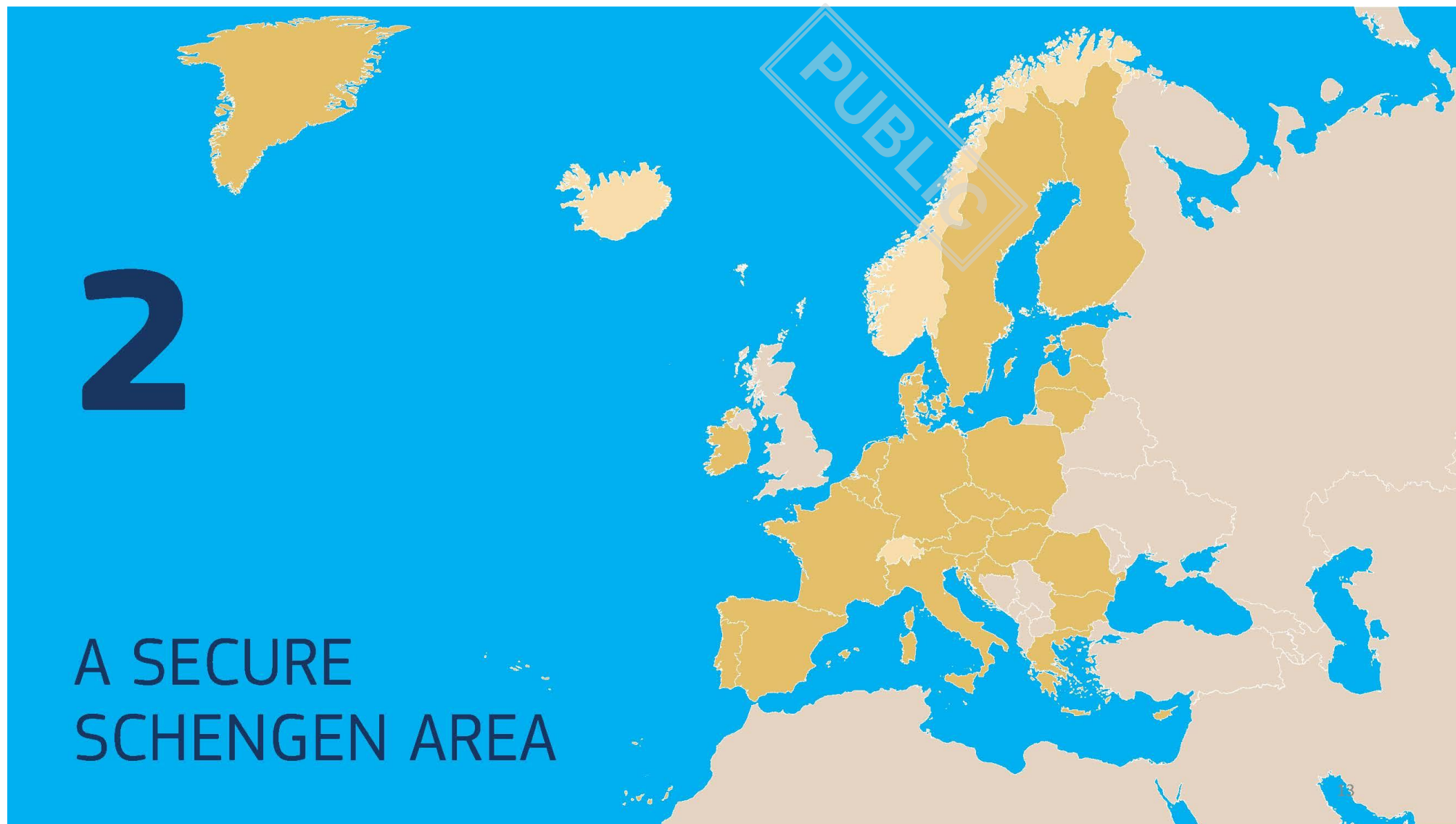
**Closer links** between asylum and returns



**Best practices identified in the Pilot Projects in Bulgaria and Romania**  
Joint issuance of asylum and return decisions

**Action 3 Return Roadmap:** Simultaneous issuance of **negative asylum and return decisions**





**Established** regional cooperation...

Visegrad+



Ministerial Trilogue

... and **launch** of new initiatives

'Whole-of-route' cooperation



Establishing Border Security Task Force

Increased **joint patrols**

- HR-SI: doubled from [redacted] in 2022 to [redacted] in 2023
- HU-SK-CZ: [redacted] Hungarian police officers conducting checks with Slovak and Czech colleagues

Enhanced **exchange of information**

- HR-IT-SI: regular meetings of police chiefs  
→ format expanded to Western Balkans

**Readmission** cooperation

**TRENDS** (2023)

- **Unprecedented** increase of illicit drugs available in Europe
- **Record** cocaine seizures in specific ports
- Highly **adaptable** and professionalised criminal networks



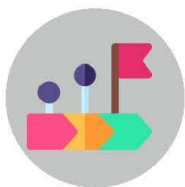
**Cocaine:** Latin America → Europe



**Synthetic Drugs:** Europe → Europe/World

**EU Toolbox**

**Agencies support**  
Frontex, Europol, Eurojust



**New EU Roadmap**  
to fight drug trafficking  
and organised crime



**European Ports**  
Alliance



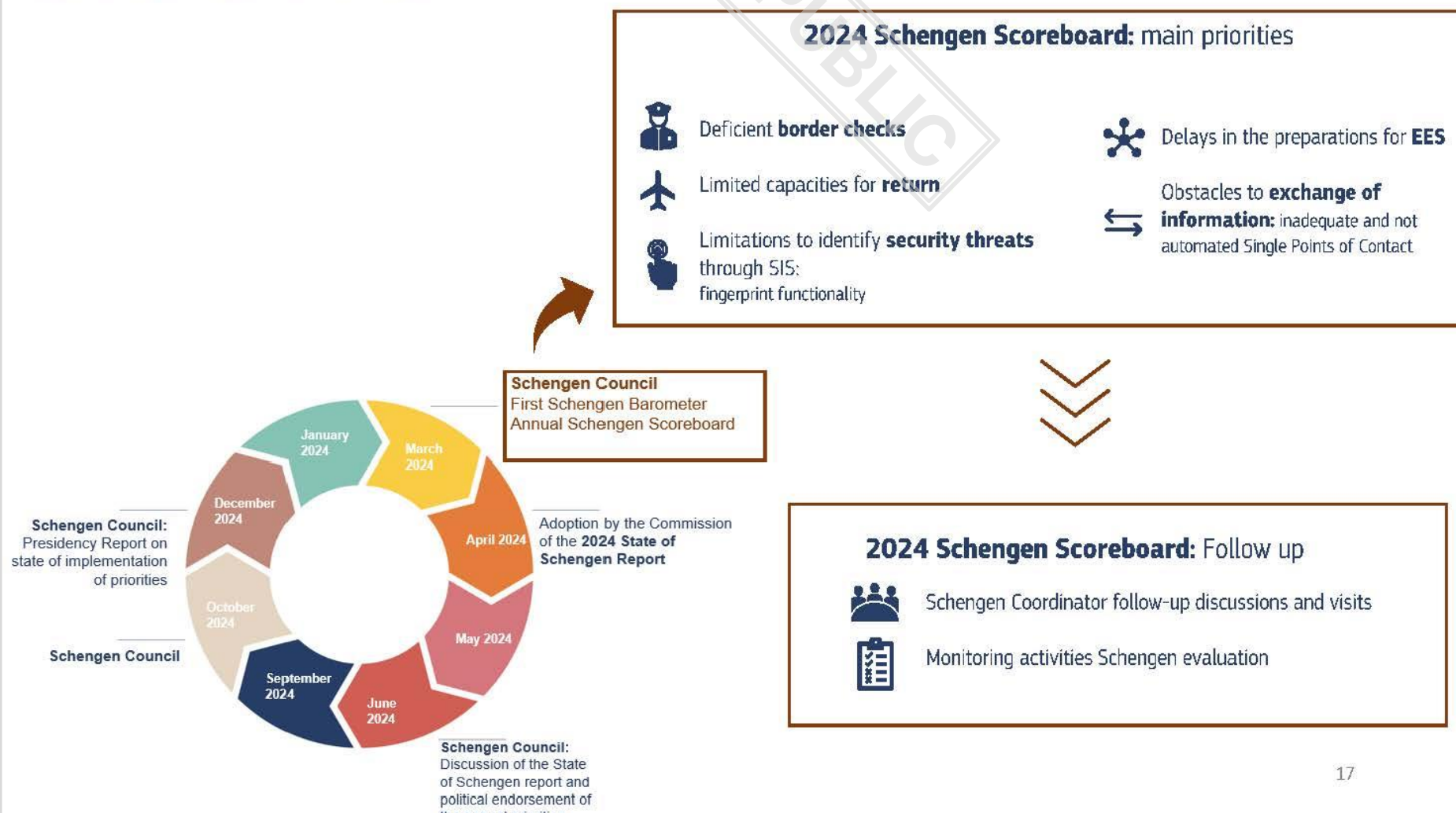
**2023 Schengen thematic**  
evaluation



**Cooperation with**  
third countries

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## SCHENGEN EVALUATIONS





# Thank you

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**Caveats** Data provided by Frontex, EUAA, eu-LISA, Europol are provisional and therefore may differ from validated data published by Eurostat or national authorities. Discrepancies between different data sources are possible due to dissimilar definitions and collection methodologies. The figures provided in this presentation should be understood as giving an estimation of the current situation in as near to real time as possible.

- Data provided by Frontex, EUAA, eu-LISA, Europol may be incomplete for some indicators.

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