



## CONCEPT NOTE

# Expert Meeting on Preventing Facilitation of Irregular Migration

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Kiev, Ukraine  
17-18 October 2017

Increased migratory flows in recent years have led to difficulties in forecasting the displacement of significant number of migrants and created challenges in migration management. The migration crisis, which mostly affected the Member States of the European Union following an influx of migrants from the Middle East and North Africa, has put before the EU and its Member States priority tasks to address the problems associated with this phenomenon, including development of effective cooperation mechanisms at national level on prevention, counteraction of irregular migration as well as amendment of legislation aimed at increasing the responsibility for organizing and facilitation of irregular migration. The European Agenda on Migration, which was adopted by European Commission on 13 May 2015, identified the fight against migrant smuggling as priority aimed at preventing exploitation of migrants by criminal networks and reducing incentives to irregular migration. Subsequently, the EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling, adopted on 27 May 2015, has set out concrete actions to counter and prevent migrant smuggling, while ensuring the protection of human rights of migrants. Furthermore, the Action Plan should be seen in broader context of EU efforts to address the root causes of irregular migration in cooperation with countries of origin and transit, and prevent the loss of lives caused by smugglers and traffickers.<sup>1</sup>

The development of strategies and tactics on prevention of facilitation of irregular migration is the primary organizational and legal task of the states under their migration policy and requires development of effective preventive measures, in particular in the following areas:

- development of systematic approach to migration management at the state level;
- identification and closure of the most intensive irregular migration channels;

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<sup>1</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eu\\_action\\_plan\\_against\\_migrant\\_smuggling\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/anti-trafficking/sites/antitrafficking/files/eu_action_plan_against_migrant_smuggling_en.pdf)



The Project is funded by the  
European Union



The Project is implemented by  
International Organization for Migration



- detection and exposure in the territories of states of criminal networks organizing smuggling of irregular migrants, producing and provision of forged documents, providing irregular migrants with housing and other services;
- creation of effective mechanisms for returning irregular migrants to the countries of their residence or to the countries from which they arrived;
- improvement of national legislation in order to identify victims of human trafficking caught up in facilitation channels;
- ensuring the legal safeguards for the migrants being smuggled and victims of trafficking;
- carrying out outreach activities aimed at increasing the migrants' awareness on consequences of using of irregular migration channels and services of facilitators;
- ensuring high-quality international cooperation through the implementation of joint projects, concluding international agreements, etc.

The problem of irregular migration has not bypassed the Eastern Partnership (EaP) countries, since these states are at the crossroads of migration routes that lead to Europe. Therefore, prevention of facilitation of irregular migration is defined as one of the priority activities for the state migration authorities.

The EaP countries have been building up the capacity to apply best European practices in countering facilitation of irregular migration and migrant smuggling, identification of victims of human trafficking for carrying out legislative and administrative reforms in the field of migration management, establishment of relevant structures and procedures.

The project "Eastern Partnership Cooperation in the fight against irregular migration – supporting the implementation of the Action Plan of the Prague Process" deserves special attention with regard to its concrete practical initiatives. The initiative, implemented during 2013-2015, contributed to strategic and operational cooperation in the EaP region on the prevention of cross-border crime, with special emphasis on irregular migration. The objectives of the project were achieved through:

- strengthening of bilateral and multilateral international cooperation between the EU and EaP countries, as well as between the EaP member countries in accordance with the existing concepts of border management;
- strengthening of national interagency cooperation in the participating countries in accordance with the existing concepts of border management;
- improvement of training programs of the national migration / law enforcement education institutions in the EaP countries.

The impact of the current migration crisis on the EU and the EaP countries, in particular in regard to irregular migration and human trafficking, became the main topic of the Expert Meeting of the Eastern Partnership Panel on Migration and Asylum held in Chisinau, Moldova, on April 14-15, 2016.



The Expert Meeting on Preventing Facilitation of Irregular Migration, to be held in Kyiv (Ukraine), on 17-18 October 2017, will be dedicated to the issues of preventing facilitation of irregular migration and will be focused on following sessions:

- **Session I** will be devoted to national approaches, as well as legislation of EU and EaP countries in the field of identification and counteracting of irregular migration channels and responsibility of facilitators; practical tools, used for prevention of irregular migration and its facilitation, in particular carrying out of information campaigns, cooperation with non-governmental sector etc.;
- **Session II** will consider the issues of strengthening cooperation of authorities involved in prevention of irregular migration and identification of facilitators. In addition, the following issues will be discussed: interagency and cross-border cooperation, cooperation between executive (law enforcement) and judicial authorities in the process of prosecution of facilitators, cooperation with financial institutions (financial intelligence units) regarding the detection and blocking of financial flows related to migrant smuggling;
- **Session III** will focus on protection of human rights of irregular migrants in the process of prevention of irregular migration, as well as challenges related to provision of humanitarian assistance to irregular migrants;
- **Session IV** – practical session, based on the active interaction among present experts, will consider one or several of the most relevant problematic aspects of prevention of facilitation of irregular migration. The topic will be identified in the process of preparation of the meeting jointly with the participating countries.

Expert meeting will become a platform for discussion and experience exchange between EU, EU Member States and EaP countries representatives, as well as representatives of international organizations, academia and non-governmental sector.

