European Commission

Directorate-General Migration and Home Affairs

Border Management and Visas beyond 2020: Scenarios and Implications

(HOME/2016/PR/MFF/0001, Lot 2)

Final Report

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Contents

Annexes

List of Abbreviations

AFIS	Automated Fingerprint Identification System
BCP	Border Crossing Point
CAC	Common Application Centre
DG HOME	Directorate General Migration and Home Affairs
EES	Entry Exit System
EEAS	European External Action Service
EMSA	European Maritime Safety Agency
ETIAS	European Travel Information and Authorisation System
EU	European Union
EURODAC	European Dactyloscopy system
EUROPOL	European Police Office
EUROSUR	European Border Surveillance System
EBCG Agency	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
H2020	Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Framework Programme
IBM	Integrated Border Management
ISF	Internal Security Fund
LEA	Law Enforcement Authority
MFF	Multi-Annual Financial Framework
MS	Member State
SIS II	Schengen Information System II
VIS	Visa Information System
UAS	Unmanned Aircraft Systems
UN	United Nations

Executive summary

Despite the significant challenges which it is facing, the European Union remains one of the most attractive regions of the world in terms of travel and migration. The unprecedented migration pressure the EU is experiencing, with its peak in 2015-2016, posed threats not only to the external borders of the Union, but also challenged the fundamental principles on which the EU was founded. In light of the massive influx of migrants crossing EU borders, and the growing number of third country nationals who enter the EU legally but stay illegally in violation of their status[1], border management and common visa policies have received high public attention. The migration crisis has highlighted the importance of EU solidarity and of a coordinated response to the threats at the EU's external borders.

The current study, commissioned by DG Migration and Home Affairs, was performed between November 2016 and February 2017 by a consortium led by the Center for the Study of Democracy (Bulgaria), with the participation of Optimity Advisors LLC (UK), and the Institute of Studies for the Integration of Systems (Italy).

The objectives of the study were to provide recommendations for the future policy and funding priorities of the European Commission (EC) in the next Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) in the areas of border management and common visa policy, and in particular on the successor of the current Internal Security Fund (ISF) - the borders and visa component. The study provides answers to the following questions:

1) How will current trends and EU policy initiatives shape the future of the EU and its borders and visa policies?
2) What are the possible scenarios beyond 2020?
3) What would be the best policy and funding response of the EC under these scenarios?

The study focused on several major uncertainties: the dynamics of migration pressure, the level of EU cooperation in general, and in particular in the area of border management, the evolution of travels to the EU and the common visa policy, and the potential implications of technological innovations. Strategic shocks, both within the EU and in its immediate neighbourhood, were also considered in the development of policy and funding recommendations. Each scenario is placed in a certain political context which provides the framework of possible developments within the EU and in its relationship with third countries.

Based on the identification of recent trends and EU initiatives, key questions and possible future developments were formulated as building blocks for the scenario narratives (Fig. 1). The cross-impact analysis of underlying political factors produced five scenario outlines, driven by the interplay of the EU's political development, the degree of border management integration and the intensity of migratory pressure. Based on the ranking and comments by an expert panel in the area of migration and border management, detailed narratives were developed for four scenarios: *More of the Same*, *Multi-speed EU, New Migration Waves* and *Stabilised EU*. Figure 2 presents the placement of the four scenario

Figure 1: Scenario building blocks

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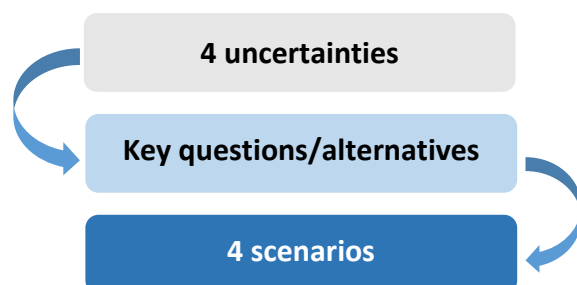
[1] While no hard data on the exact number of 'overstayers' in the EU is available, the significance of the issue is recognized in official documents of the EC: e.g. COM(2016) 194 final, and in risk analyses by Frontex (2016).

outlines along two axes: migration pressure and integration of EU border management.

Following each scenario narrative, the study presents the respective EU policy and funding implications, and discusses how the EU, under that scenario, would react to pre-defined strategic shocks.

In the last part of the study, two groups of developments are highlighted, corresponding to two criteria: high recurrence, i.e. occurring under multiple scenarios, and high impact, i.e. developments which, even if not very likely and occurring under a single scenario, would have serious consequences if realised. These highlighted developments outline the framework of possible trends and events, which the EU should consider as it develops policies regarding border management and visas beyond 2020.

Figure 2: Scenario outlines
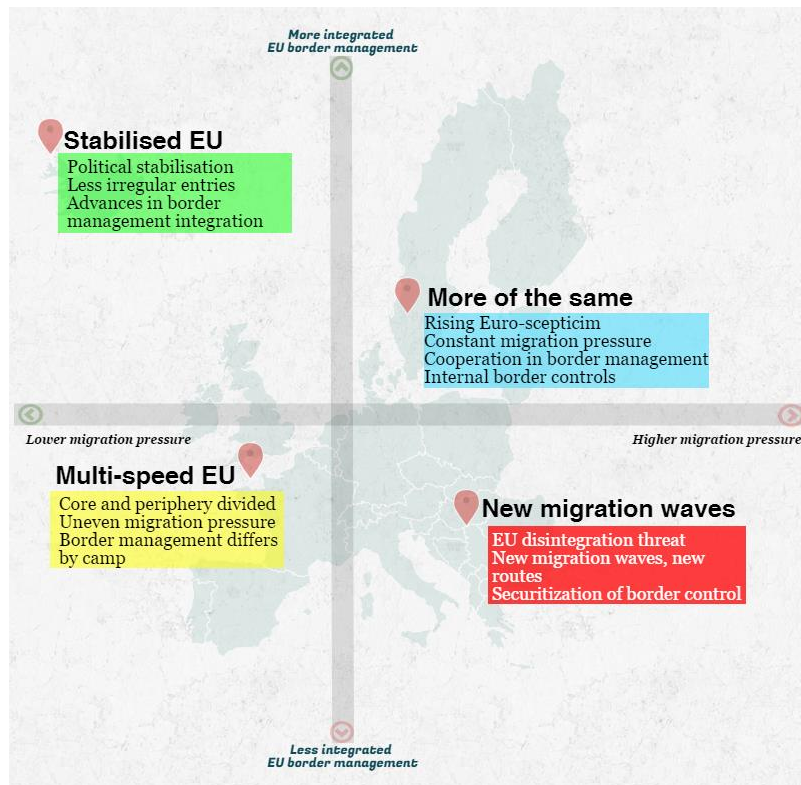
Reflecting on the highlighted developments, the study team, in consultation with selected experts from the expert panel, outlined four groups of policy and funding recommendations for the MFF beyond 2020:

1. **Continued top priorities:** Purchase of equipment, vehicles, vessels and aircraft by Member States to be at the disposal of the EBCG Agency for joint operations, emergency assistance and maritime operations or operations in third countries; upgrading of existing IT and communications systems (SISII, VIS, EURODAC) and roll out of emerging systems (EES, ETIAS); investments in EUROSUR and enhancing the reaction capacities at the blue and green borders; achieving interoperability of operational equipment, tools, communications systems and mobility assets; enhancing capacities to detect document and identity fraud (both at BCPs and at consular offices).
2. **New priorities or priorities which should be further incentivized:** systems, equipment and actions to control secondary movements of irregular migrants; enhanced support for actions in third countries by Member States and the EBCG Agency; incentives for consular cooperation.
3. **Areas of less attention:** EUROSUR development as a required component for all Member States; support for developing national capacities related to borders and common visa policy (as these categories are too broad and should be more narrowly defined to cover specific objectives, such as building response capacities at green and blue borders, providing equipment in support of EBCG Agency, or support for implementation of the Visa Code amendments).
4. **Fund management:** introducing two mid-term reviews to assess project implementation and revise the Fund's priorities.

Part I. Introduction and methodology

1.1. Introduction: problem definition and objectives of the study

The study was commissioned by DG Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME) in the context of the preparation for the next MFF (post-2020). Due to the extremely dynamic situation in the areas of Home Affairs in the current MFF (2014-2020), the initial budget of EUR 6.9 billion has been substantially increased and may grow further by the end of the framework period. The scenarios developed within this study are designed to help the EC in its elaboration of the post-2020 funding priorities in the areas of the common visa policy and border management[2], in the context of legal travel and irregular migration, as well as technological developments and global strategic shocks that could impact policy making and funding decisions beyond 2020.

The objectives of the study are to review current developments and issues in the area of border management and the common visa policy, and based on the analysis of observed trends and ongoing initiatives, to build 4 scenarios for possible futures beyond 2020. The implications of the scenarios on EU border management and the common visa policy will contribute to defining future policy and funding priorities of the EC in the next MFF. The study focuses on the major uncertainties (specified in the Terms of Reference of the study) that could affect border management and common visa policy post 2020, and on how DG HOME would be best prepared to respond to the challenges that the EU might face. These uncertainties are:

- How the migratory pressure on the EU will develop;

- What challenges the EU will face in the area of border management;

- How travel into the EU and the Common Visa Policy will evolve;

- How border management will benefit from technological developments;

- What possible strategic shocks in the EU's immediate neighbourhood and within the EU might impact the area of border management and visas.

The study reviews the key emerging trends and initiatives in relation to the above uncertainties and formulates a framework of possible future scenarios, to inform strategic planning and funding in the area of migration and security.

The study consists of three parts. Part 1 provides a description of the scenario building process, including a review of the framework of uncertainties and the major questions of developments within each uncertainty. It also defines the methodology applied in developing the scenarios, and the process of scenario selection. Part 2 presents the narratives of the selected scenarios. At the end of each scenario, policy and funding implications are discussed, along with the impact of potential strategic shocks (i.e. unforeseen events of significant impact). Part 3 summarises the relevant conclusions and recommendations for EU policy and EU funding priorities beyond 2020 in the areas of border management and common visa policy.

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[2] The main focus of the study is on EU's external borders, but it also touches upon internal (secondary) movements of irregular migrants.

1.2. Methodology

The methodology for the scenario development was structured in three steps. The **first step** comprised a detailed analysis of the factors that would define the future state of border management and common visa policy. Four major areas of uncertainties were studied: migration pressure, developments in the border management of EU external borders, the evolution of travel into the EU and the common visa policy, and technological innovations that could improve border management. As an underlying factor for the above uncertainties, possible alternative futures of the political evolution of the EU were also considered. In addition, a list of potential strategic shocks was compiled to be used in the elaboration of policy and funding implications.

Based on the review of key facts, trends and EU initiatives in the four major areas of uncertainties mentioned above, questions around possible future developments were formulated. The analysis outlined two major uncertainties for building the scenarios: the levels of migration pressure and of border management cooperation. Key questions and possible paths of development were formulated for the uncertainties. A cross-impact analysis of alternative paths was conducted, leading to the selection of five sets of combinations. Developments in the area of common visa policy were analysed separately, as they are driven by a different set of factors, not directly related to the levels of migration pressure and border management cooperation.

As a **second step**, the five selected combinations of answers to key questions were developed into scenario outlines and were sent out to an expert panel. The experts were asked to rank the scenarios in terms of plausibility and impact, and to comment on the scenarios' internal consistency. The expert panel included academic researchers, practitioners and policy makers in the areas of border management, migration and international relations, with experience both within the EU and in neighbouring countries (the Balkans, North Africa and Ukraine), as well as experts on foresight analysis.

In a **third step**, based on the feedback from the expert panel, four scenario outlines were developed into more detailed narratives. The policy and funding implications for each of the scenarios' were elaborated by the study team in brainstorming sessions and discussions with selected experts from the expert panel. As part of the scenario analysis, the impact of strategic shocks was defined for each of the four scenarios.

A comprehensive description of the scenario building methodology, as well as list of names of the study team and the members of the expert panel are presented in the Annex *Methodology*.

1.3. Major Factors Affecting the Area of Border Management and Common Visa Policy

1.3.1. Political Context

Before discussing the major uncertainties in the area of border management and common visa policy, we briefly review the key issues of the current political and macro-economic context, as they will define the framework of possible developments from the ongoing 'existential crisis'[3] of the EU. Based on the review of current trends, the following ***key questions on the political contex***t have been identified:

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[3] State of the Union Address 2016: Towards a better Europe - a Europe that protects, empowers and defends, Strasbourg, 14 September 2016

Within the EU:

- **Threats to EU unity and solidarity:** Will the EU's response to the challenges of anti-EU populism be effective? Will other Member States, following the example of the UK's referendum to leave the EU, question their membership in the EU, or try to significantly change its terms? Will disagreements among Member States lead to the emergence of individual Member States or groups of Member States which oppose certain EU-wide decisions and follow their own policies, or refuse to participate in joint initiatives? How will this affect the cooperation in managing the EU external borders and the solidarity among Member States?
- **Threats to the Schengen Agreement:** Will re-introduction of border controls at the internal borders become a recurring practice (in response to terrorist threats or to secondary movements of refugees and irregular migrants)? Will it become necessary to reconsider certain aspects of the Schengen Agreement related to internal borders in order to keep the Schengen area intact?

Outside the EU:

- **Countries of origin and transit in Africa and the Middle East:** Will relationships with countries of origin and so called gatekeeper states improve in terms of cooperation in the control of migration flows to Europe? Will the 2016 agreement with Turkey produce the expected long-term effect on irregular migration on the Eastern Mediterranean route[4]? Will similar agreements be reached with other neighbouring countries (e.g. Libya, Egypt, Tunisia)[5]? Will the efforts to combat, in cooperation with countries of origin and countries of transit, smuggler networks operating throughout Africa and the Middle East[6] result in the decline of the migration pressure?
- **Russia:** Will Russia attempt to destabilise the EU (e.g. by providing support for euro-sceptic and anti-mainstream parties, or by deploying hybrid war tactics to re-assert its influence[7])? Alternatively, if Russia itself is destabilised, will it pose threats to EU eastern borders, e.g. through tolerating a migration wave from its territory to the EU?

1.3.2. Migratory Pressure

The continued presence of migration pressure on the EU (with some variations in its intensity, migratory routes and countries of origin) is not in itself an uncertainty. What is uncertain is the way the Union will respond to the pressure and, at the same time, the way the migration pressure will reshape the EU itself.

The unprecedented migratory and refugee crisis following the sharp increase of mixed migratory flows in 2015 prompted individual Member States to respond with a temporary introduction of internal border checks and in some cases even closing the borders and erecting preventive structures, such as

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[4] Ülgen, Sinan. "Whither Turkey?" *Carnegie Europe.* 2016.; Aydintasbas, Asli. "Trouble on the tracks: Averting the Turkey-EU 'train wreck'." *European Council on Foreign Relations.* 2016.

[5] Malta Declaration by the members of the European Council on the external aspects of migration: addressing the Central Mediterranean route, 3 February 2017.

[6] Herbert, Matthew. "At the edge: Trends and routes of North African clandestine migrants." *Institute for Security Studies.* 299. 2016; Tinti, Peter and Tom Westoot. "The Niger-Libya corridor: Smugglers' perspectives." *Institute for Security Studies.* 299. 2016; SAHAN and IGAD. *Human Trafficking and Smuggling on the Horn of Africa-Central Mediterranean Route.* 2016; Reitano, Tuesday. "The Khartoum Process: A sustainable response to human smuggling and trafficking?" *Institute for Security Studies.* 2016.

[7] Polyakova, Alina. "The Kremlin's support for right-wing parties is no game. It's trying to subvert the European idea." *Foreign Policy.* 2016.

fences. The migration crisis revealed serious structural deficiencies in the protection of the EU's external borders. In 2015, Norway, Germany, Sweden, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia, Denmark, the Czech Republic[8], Belgium, France and Malta, employed measures related to managing the migrant pressure and flow that undermined the Schengen Agreement[9].

SCOPE OF STUDY / CRITICAL ISSUES:

- COOPERATION WITH GATEKEEPER STATES AND COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
- EFFECTIVE RETURN AND READMISSION POLICIES
- CURBING ACTIVITIES OF SMUGGLERS NETWORKS

Bilateral Agreements / Return and Readmission (with countries of origin and transit): The EU-Turkey Statement and Joint Action Plan implementing the EU-Turkey Statement and the Facility for Refugees in Turkey are key initiatives designed to manage the migrant flows from Turkey. EU Readmission Agreements are in place with other third countries.

Based on the observed trends, EU legal and policy initiatives, and expert consultations, the study team formulated the following key questions and possible responses to the migration pressure:

Key questions on migratory pressure

Will the EU's efforts to engage gatekeeper states, countries of transit and countries of origin in the control and management of migration flows be successful?

A. The EU-Turkey Statement and Joint Action Plan implementing the EU-Turkey Statement continue being effective in controlling the number of migrants/refugees released from Turkey into the EU. Similar agreements and financial instruments are developed with other countries of transit and origin. The EU's migration policies in addressing the root causes for migration in countries of origin (in particular in sub-Saharan Africa) produce some positive outcomes in the mid-term. Migration pressure is put under control.

B. The efforts of the EU to engage third countries are damaged by tensions among Member States on setting agendas and agreeing specific incentives to third countries, such as financial resources or arrangements for partnerships or accession. In addition, significant deviations from the political values of the EU by certain third countries may prevent the EU from entering into or sustaining agreements and partnership with them. The migrant flow is being halted by re-enforcing border surveillance and reaction capacities, including constructing technical obstacles along the external borders. Migration pressure on the external borders remains high.

Will reforms in the return and readmission policies have a positive impact on curbing migration pressure on the external borders?

A. Revised policies on return, readmission and reintegration meet expectations of Member States. Readmission arrangements are successfully negotiated or re-negotiated with African countries in particular. Migration pressure at external borders remains high but is largely alleviated by an effective system of returns. EC financial commitment in combatting the root causes of migration yields positive results in readmission and reintegration processes.

B. Return mechanisms remain a difficult area for negotiation with third countries and implementation

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[8] The Czech Republic has not officially reintroduced their border controls, but has intensified police presence and checks of travellers. Frontex, Risk Analysis, March 2016.

[9] Frontex, Risk Analysis for 2016, March 2016.; COM (2016) 275 final.

by Member States and the EBCG Agency. Readmission and reintegration instruments are plagued by inefficient management in target third countries. Member States' support for such measures falters and common EU policies give way to bilateral agreements.

Will the EU Action Plan against migrant smuggling curb the activities of smugglers networks and thus reduce migrant pressure?
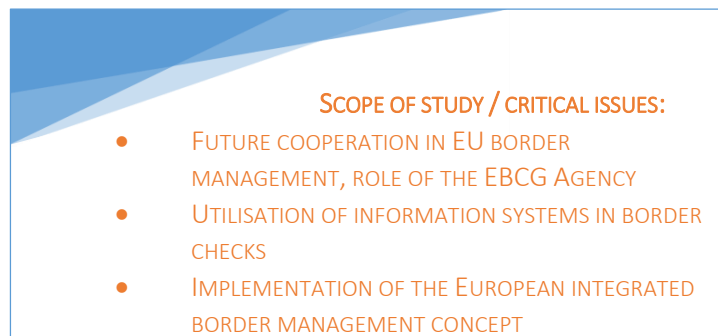
A. Continued legislative and technical harmonisation allows for a more effective and efficient fight against cross-border and transnational organised crimes such as migrant smuggling. With an increase in the number of effective convictions, the "cost of doing business" in these criminal markets soars, and criminal activity declines, leading to weaker migration pressure.

B. Due to multiple reasons (inefficient cross-border investigations, inadequate prosecution, legislative discrepancies between participating jurisdictions) the migrant smuggling market remains a lucrative, low-risk endeavour for criminal groups, and respectively migration pressure continues to be high.

1.3.3. Border Management

The migration crisis has posed unprecedented challenges to the effective and secure border management at EU external borders:

Border surveillance

- **Historically high numbers of irregular border crossings** at land and sea borders make it practically impossible to implement full standard procedures for all those apprehended;
- **Smugglers relying on search and rescue operations** at sea as a routine modus operandi of irregular entry into the EU;
- **Displacement effects**: securing a certain border section or even a migration route re-directs irregular entries to another border section.

SCOPE OF STUDY / CRITICAL ISSUES:
- FUTURE COOPERATION IN EU BORDER MANAGEMENT, ROLE OF THE EBCG AGENCY
- UTILISATION OF INFORMATION SYSTEMS IN BORDER CHECKS
- IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EUROPEAN INTEGRATED BORDER MANAGEMENT CONCEPT

Border checks

- **Pressure for speedy and effective processing** of an ever increasing passenger flow[10];
- The introduction of **systematic checks against relevant databases of all travellers**, including EU citizens, at both entry and exit at external borders[11];
- **Attempts at clandestine entries** at land and sea BCPs[12];
- Challenges to **identify document and identity fraud**, using imperfect technological and human resources;[13]
- Border checks on exit **cannot report and identify overstayers systematically,** resulting in a lack of reliable information on irregular immigration by third country nationals who enter the EU legally but fail to leave within the required timeframe[14].

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[10] Per Frontex passenger flow data, entries have increased from 194,7M in 2013 to 235,0M in 2015 and 289,7M in 2016.
[11] Regulation (EU) 2017/458
[12] Detections of clandestine entries in 2016 were 2, 028, down from 3,303 in 2015 (Frontex, Risk Analysis for 2017, p.48)
[13] Frontex: The Document Challenge II, 2014
[14] SWD(2016) 116 final (Impact assessment of the EES)

EU response: current and upcoming initiatives

- **The EBCG Agency**[15], officially launched in October 2016, has functions that go beyond the mandate of its predecessor Frontex. The EBCG Agency will have at its disposal a rapid reserve pool of border guards and a technical equipment pool, ensuring the immediate availabilities of the minimum number of resources needed for launching rapid border interventions and joint operations in third countries.

- **The European Integrated Border Management (IBM)** is defined in the EBCG Regulation[16]. Traditionally, European integrated border management is based on the four-tier access control model comprising 1) measures in third countries, 2) measures with neighbouring third countries, 3) border control measures at the external borders and 4) measures within the Schengen area. It consists of 11 strategic components, including border control, search and rescue in situations which may arise during maritime border surveillance operations, risk analysis, interagency cooperation, cooperation between Member States, a Schengen quality control mechanism and solidarity mechanisms, in particular Union funding instruments. The European Border and Coast Guard is established to implement European integrated border management as a shared responsibility of the EBCG Agency and of the national authorities responsible for border management, including coast guards to the extent that they carry out border control tasks. The European IBM concept is operationalised and further developed through integrated strategy process covering interoperable national and EU level IBM strategies.

- **Evolution of the Information Systems for Borders and Security**[17]**:** Proposed improvements include the **Automated Fingerprint Identification System** (AFIS), which would add a fingerprint search functionality to the **Schengen Information System** (SISII). Additional functionalities in SISII are being considered, such as alerts on irregular migrants who are subject of return procedures, or the use of facial images for biometric identification. The ability to track secondary movements of irregular migrants will be enhanced by a reform of **EURODAC**. The **Entry Exit System** (EES) has been proposed as a solution and way forward towards bridging the gaps in common EU border management[18]. Further investment from the Commission is expected to be used for developing and implementing the **European Travel Information and Authorisation System** (ETIAS)[19].

Based on the observed trends, EU legal and policy initiatives, and expert consultations, the study team formulated the following key questions and possible responses that would shape the future developments in the area of border management beyond 2020.

Key questions on border management

Will EU cooperation in border management continue, or will it slow down? Will the role of the EBCG Agency in managing the external borders be expanded? Will it have sufficient support from Member States in terms of equipment and deployed staff?

A. The EBCG Agency proves effective and cost efficient and gradually expands its functions, taking some functions from national border authorities in managing EU external borders. Member States provide full support in terms of equipment and deployed staff.

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[15] Regulation (EU) 2016/1624

[16] Ibid.

[17] Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council: Stronger and Smarter Information Systems for Borders and Security, COM (2016) 205 final

[18] COM(2016) 205 final, 2016.

[19] European Commission, Factsheet ETIAS - The European Travel Information and Authorisation System

B. The performance and usefulness of the EBCG Agency is questioned by some Member States and they withdraw support. National border authorities retain sole responsibility and carry the burden of protecting the external borders.

Will the introduction of new and enhancing of existing information systems result in faster and more secure border checks, based on risk assessment and differentiated checks for verified travellers?

A. The use of advance travellers' information and intelligence data will significantly expedite the border checking process for bona fide travellers and allow for more in-depth checks of those who might present a security risk.

B. Flaws in assembling and processing of advance travellers' information, along with security concerns will slow down border checks for all travellers, including EU citizens and bona fide travellers from third countries.

How will the implementation of the European Integrated Border Management concept evolve, in particular the cooperation between agencies whose functions are linked to border management (migration and asylum, customs, police, national security/anti-terrorist agencies)?

A. Member States will actively collaborate in linking their information resources to combat the threats of terrorism, irregular migration and international organised crime, by providing border authorities access to critical security-related databases.

B. Member States will selectively share information due to lack of trust and focus on unilateral approaches to threats of terrorism, irregular migration and international organised crime.

1.3.4. Common Visa Policy

The common visa policy is designed to meet two main objectives: to facilitate the entry of legal visitors into the EU and to prevent irregular migration and safeguard a high level of security within the EU.

Travel facilitation

Although the number of issued Schengen visas is marking a downward trend in the last three years, increased volume of applications in certain populous third countries may present a challenge to the effective and efficient application of the Visa Code by the affected Member States[20]. For example, the numbers of visa applications in Iran, India, China, Turkey, among others, exhibit a sharp upward trend during the last several years (see table 1). As demand for travel and tourism in the EU and Schengen visas is expected to remain high in the

Table 1: Demand for Schengen visas (DG HOME statistics)

Country	Schengen Visa Applications		% increase
	2014	**2016**	
IRAN	160,145	224,502	40%
INDIA	568,216	792,271	39%
MOROCCO	434,652	555,142	28%
ALGERIA	593,624	744,213	25%
CHINA	1,800,369	2,185,927	21%
TURKEY	813,339	937,487	15%

near future, the EC and Parliament have sought to improve the visa application and issuance regulations and practices, whereby preserving a balance between economic and security concerns. The EC's evaluation of the Visa Code back in 2013 has identified a number of deficiencies in its implementation, highlighting **the overall length and costs (direct and indirect) and the cumbersome nature of the procedures,** and **insufficient geographical coverage in visa processing**[21]. The resultant proposal for recast and amendment of the Visa Code includes:

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[20] DG HOME: Visa statistics: Schengen States receive 15.2 million applications for short-stay visas in 2016 (18.4.2017)
[21] COM(2014) 165 final

- Reducing the deadline for processing a visa application and making a decision;
- Facilitation of the process for frequent visitors who have shown that they can be trusted, including the mandatory issuing of multiple entry visas valid for three years;
- Simplifying application forms and allowing online applications;
- The possibility for special schemes granting visas at the border which are valid for up to 15 days;
- The possibility to facilitate the issuing of visas for visitors attending major events.[22]

Preventing irregular migration

A significant challenge in the prevention of irregular migration is the verification of travellers' identity and of travel documents that are presented either at the time of visa application or at the border. Although numbers of detected fraudulent documents at external border shows a steady downward trend since 2013[23], their actual prevalence has been increasingly under-represented as the main focus at the national level is still on forged and counterfeit documents, rather than modi operandi involving false identities or impostors[24]. The use of biometric travel documents renders document fraud increasingly difficult. Nevertheless, facilitators are developing new techniques to circumvent biometric checks, such as the use of supporting documents to fraudulently obtain authentic travel documents, including visas, or impostor techniques.

The EES will provide valuable information both on persons who have violated the terms of their previous entries into the EU, and statistics on the number of violators by country. Consular staff should be trained to utilise these data in the processing of visa applications.

Key questions on common visa policy

How will consular cooperation evolve?

A. Member States will take advantage of the opportunities to expand geographical coverage through co-location and common application centres (CAC), thus cutting costs for maintaining consular presence.

B. Consular cooperation will not make significant progress, as Member States would prefer to deploy external service providers instead of co-location with other Member States or setting up CACs.

What impact will document and identity fraud have on visa policy?

A. Fraud attempts will decrease or remain at relatively low levels. The intensive use of biometrics will limit fraudsters' arsenal and capabilities to bypass system security and fraud prevention measures. Policy will be focused on streamlining the visa application and visa issuing processes.

B. Fraud attempts will be rising, as developments in the biometric technology make it possible for criminal networks to successfully exploit weaknesses and vulnerabilities in the ICT and biometric systems. As a result, the Visa Code will be further amended to allow for additional security measures.

What impact may changes in the Visa Code exert?

A. The creation of the category of *bona fide* "regular traveller" in the Visa Code will facilitate the application process for trusted travellers, and the increased volume of longer-term multiple entry visas will further optimise resources deployed in visa issuing. The adoption of electronic application and E-visa issuance further will also reduce the strain on human resources and facilities. However, the envisioned amendments to the Visa Code may also require specific funding related to: training (for all amendments introducing new procedures); ICT system developments and/or upgrades to

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[22] COM(2014) 164 final
[23] See Frontex Risk Anlysis 2017 through 2015
[24] Frontex Risk Analysis 2012.

accommodate potential new functionalities, including for electronic application and E-visa, as well as for developing and implementing robust information security measures; equipment for issuing visas at the respective BCPs (for visa issuance at the border).

B. The Visa Code is only partially amended with Member States preserving powers of discretion in visa issuance, e.g. the length of mandatory multi entry visas[25]. As a result changes in the Visa Code fail to secure the intended further streamlining and harmonisation of Schengen visa issuance across the EU.

1.3.5. Technological Innovations

Technological innovations that could improve border management are being constantly developed and considered. To have a practical impact, a technological innovation needs to meet three conditions: 1) be a technologically proven and mature concept; 2) be available on the market as a product/service at a reasonable price; 3) be acceptable (in terms of policy and legal compliance) for implementation both at national and European level.

Border checks
- Further automation of border checks and deployment of remote checks of persons and vehicles through several layers of border control (before and after crossing of borders);
- Broad utilisation of biometric identifiers at border checks that would facilitate the processing of bona fide travellers and the detection of attempted travel document and identity fraud;
- Application of various sensor devices for detecting hidden persons and illegal substances;
- Deployment of risk analysis in customizing the border check process;
- Deployment of simple to use tools that detect false declarations during interviews (e.g. when screening migrants or during second line checks in border control).

Border surveillance:
- Introduction of unmanned aerial systems for border surveillance at the land and sea borders;
- Introduction of maritime surveillance systems with detection at far range which transmit information in real time to different authorities involved in the surveillance within the Member States and across the Member States.

Based on the observed trends and expert consultations, the study team formulated the following key questions and possible responses in relation to technological innovations beyond 2020.

Key questions on technological innovations

Will available and emerging technological developments that could improve border management and processing of visa applications be deployed on a timely basis and in a uniform manner by all Member States?

A. All Member States and the EBCG Agency contribute to the timely and consistent deployment of available technological innovations.

B. Deployment of technological innovations is delayed or is not rolled out to all Member States due to disagreements on priorities, diverging policies in border management followed by various Member States, or insufficient resources.

What would be the main objective of Member States when implementing technological innovations: securing the borders and preventing irregular border crossings, or facilitation of passenger flows?

A. Improved border surveillance and less intensive pressure on EU's external green and blue borders

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[25] 2014/0094 (COD)

allow more resources to be dedicated to introduction of technological innovations aimed at facilitating the passenger flow at BCPs.

B. Continued migration pressure at EU's green and blue borders require most technological innovations to focus on securing external borders and curbing irregular border crossings.

1.3.6. Strategic Shocks

In this study, strategic shocks are defined as unforeseen, sudden events which might significantly alter the context of development in the area of border management and common visa policy. The same strategic shocks may happen under any of the four scenarios. However, the consequences and implications of any given strategic shock would be different under each scenario. Some examples of strategic shocks would include:

External strategic shocks in the EU neighbourhood

- Serious **disagreements between gatekeeper states and the EU**, resulting in intentional breaches of agreements to control migration to the EU;
- **Opening up of new migratory routes:** due to sudden escalation of the conflict in Ukraine, or as a result of deteriorating relations between the EU and Russia, migration pressure may increase on the borders of Poland, Slovakia, Hungary or Romania.

Internal strategic shocks within the EU

- A decision (through a referendum or otherwise) of a **Member State to leave the EU**;
- **A major terrorist attack** on a Member State which has not suffered such attacks in the past and is less experienced in responding to terrorism.

Part II. Scenario narratives

Based on the identification of recent trends in the areas of border management, migratory pressure, common visa policy and technological innovations, key issues and possible future developments were formulated, as building blocks for the scenario narratives. The cross-impact analysis of underlying political factors produced four scenario narratives, driven by the interplay of EU's political development, the degree of border management cooperation and the intensity of migratory pressure. Figure 3 presents at a glance the major features of each scenario narrative. The detailed description of the four scenarios is followed by analysis of the EU policy and funding implications, and an assessment of the impact of possible strategic shocks under the respective scenario.

Figure 3: Scenarios at a glance

	MORE OF THE SAME	MULTI-SPEED EU	NEW MIGRATION WAVES	STABILISED EU
Political context	EU in existential crisis, strong Euro-scepticism	EU is divided into camps on economic and migration policy grounds	Strong tensions within EU, division into rich core and struggling periphery	EU scepticism is subsiding, economic stability returns; EU Army established
Migration pressure	Stable migration pressure but no migration waves; Continued cooperation with gate-keeper states	Decrease in overall migration pressure to EU; Countries of entry bear most burden of migration	New strong migration waves and new routes; Collapse of cooperation with gate-keeper states	Declining migration pressure, effective return policies
Border management	Progress in integration of border management; Periodic introduction of internal border control	Limited integration of border management due to camps; Lack of trust hampers sharing of information among MS	Uncoordinated response to challenges at external borders; emphasis on internal borders	Strong progress in border management integration; interoperability of information systems is quickly advancing
Technological innovations	Slow implementation of technological innovations; focus on security versus passenger flow facilitation	Different degrees of utilisation of available technological innovations	Short term focus prevails in response to migration waves	Innovations contribute to passenger flow facilitation
Strategic shocks				
Impact	Strongly negative, EU poorly prepared	Threats to compliance with EU acquis, EU poorly prepared	Threats to EU fundamental freedoms and EU unity	Limited impact, as EU is well prepared to mitigate risks

2.1. Scenario MORE OF THE SAME

Political context: economic downturn, rising Euro-scepticism

The economic situation in most of the EU is unstable, with interchanging periods of moderate and low growth. Tensions among Member States in the Euro zone continue, and small crises are recurring. Budget deficits and rising national debts are typical for key Member States. Real household incomes stagnate.

Unemployment continues to be the most important issue affecting the public opinion, despite the lower rates of unemployment compared to crisis periods in the 2010s. Internal migration within the EU (from South and Eastern Europe to Western and Northern Europe) triggers and reinforces negative reactions to migration in general in the countries of destination. Member States with high GDP introduce various restrictions on access to their systems of social benefits and health care[26].

Strong nationalist and euro-sceptic attitudes prevail, as the presence of migrants is felt ever stronger not only in large European cities but also in smaller towns whose population is not used to migrant communities. Migrants who are not integrating or violate the moral or legal norms of host societies further fuel anti-migrant attitudes, re-enforced by populist media channels, sometimes financed by Russia[27] or other non-EU parties.

The functioning of the principal EU institutions is under constant threat, in particular in Member States with faltering economies. After the decision of the UK voters to leave the EU (with some cooperation mechanisms with the EU preserved), other net donor Member States keep debating similar moves, prompted by the rise of populist demands, and further lowering of EU cohesion. Public opinion in key Member States is sharply divided between pro- and anti-EU politics. In some Member States populist parties (on either end of the political spectrum) come to power and question some terms of their country's EU membership. US policy of economic protectionism and immigration restrictions gives further strength to right-wing populist parties in the EU[28]. EU enlargement is put on hold, limiting the capacity of the EU to influence developments in the Western Balkans, Turkey or the Eastern neighbourhood.

In response to rising pressure from public opinion, border control in the EU is tightened, not only at the external borders, but also within the Schengen Area where different forms of checks on persons are introduced.

Migration pressure: constant pressure, rare outbursts

On a global scale, **migration pressure remains stable**. Gatekeeper states are cooperative but smuggling networks are still facilitating a significant flow of migrants. Governments in countries of origin in Africa, Central Asia (Afghanistan in particular) and the Middle East are pressed to tackle the rising demographic challenges and view migration of their citizens as both a way to ease domestic hardship and earn financial support for their cooperation with the EU. Agreements on readmission of irregular migrants are concluded between a number of key countries of origin and of destination. Irregular migrants are kept in closed migration centres (like the ones on the Greek islands)[29] but returns are relatively few and remain costly and ineffective. Member States on the southern external

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[26] Such practices are already observed, e.g. 'Germany limits EU citizens' access to benefits' (Deutsche Welle, 12.10.2016, http://dw.com/p/2RAAI)

[27] Russia 'stoking refugee unrest in Germany to topple Angela Merkel' (The Guardian, 05.03.2016); How the Kremlin Manipulates Europe's Refugee Crisis (The Observer, 04.06.2016); Karl Laske, Marine Turchi, Le FN a obtenu ses millions Russes (19 May 20165, Mediapart).

[28] See for example European Populism in the Age of Donald Trump, (The New York Times, 5 December 2016).

[29] Refugee camps on Greek islands 'bursting at the seams' as crossings from Turkey begin to pick up (The Telegraph, 16.08.2016); Migration minister eyes 'closed' facilities on islands (www.ekathimerini.com, 18.12.2016)

borders continue to experience a disproportionate burden from the migration flows. Secondary movements, in particularly those passively or actively encouraged by countries of first entry into the EU, become a source of political tensions within the Union.

Border management: continued integration, internal border checks re-introduced

While EU Member States disagree on many aspects of the common Union policies, the control and protection of the external borders is **an area enjoying high degree of cooperation and solidarity**. Even countries which are in favour of curtailing the role of EU administration cooperate in strengthening the integrated border management through the development of shared information systems for border surveillance and for control of movements of third-country nationals (e.g. the further enhancement of SISII and VIS, and introduction of EES and ETIAS). Solidarity among Member States is also demonstrated in joint operations, secondment of border guards to countries experiencing extraordinary pressure, and the pooling of border guards and equipment in the gradual evolvement of the EBCG Agency into a force that is capable of initiating and implementing operations with its own resources.

At the same time, Member States and other countries on the migratory routes to Western and Northern Europe **continue to reinforce their land borders** with fences designed to deter irregular border crossings (such as those erected in Bulgaria, Hungary, FYR of Macedonia, Spain, Greece and Slovenia). Internal border checks in the Schengen area are re-introduced on a regular basis prompted by secondary movements of irregular migrants (similar to recent measures taken by France, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Austria).

While the need for cooperation in curbing the migration pressure is not debated, in practice the introduction of new information systems (EES, ETIAS) is slowed down by diverging priorities of Member States and **clashes between proponents of stricter security measures, on the one hand, and concerns for data protection, privacy and observing fundamental rights, on the other**.

Technology developments: delayed deployment

The two most significant innovations affecting border management are the gradual **introduction of the EES and ETIAS** and their integration with existing information systems (VIS, SISII, EURODAC). Interoperability of information systems is generally accepted as a goal, but progress varies by Member State, due to diverging priorities or insufficient national funding.

Innovations in risk assessment of travellers' profiles are available and are offered as mature business products at competitive prices. Other potential innovations include: use of sensors and drones for surveillance of maritime and land borders; face recognition and other techniques for speeding up border checks; surveillance of communications between smugglers networks, etc. However, fundamental rights (data protection) concerns at EU level and disagreement on the appropriateness of these innovations slow down the introduction and implementation of the new equipment and control systems by all Member States. Pilot projects are implemented at the borders of some Member States but the full potential of the innovations is not utilised.

EU POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policy measures under the *MORE OF THE SAME* scenario should address equally the curbing of irregular border crossings, strengthening the external maritime and land borders as well as the prevention of the misuse of legal channels. Due to continued migration flows and public opinion pressure to curb the entry of migrants into the EU, short-term measures, such as re-enforcing reaction capabilities at blue

and green borders and monitoring and disrupting the activities of smuggling networks operating in the Mediterranean should be given prevalence over longer term objectives for facilitation of passenger flows, visa liberalization, and development and deployment of technological innovations.

1. Changes in EU border management policies should reflect the frequent and extended re-introduction of internal border checks in the Schengen Area. The relevance and utility of the practice of random checks at internal borders should be evaluated. If there is a trend of too frequent re-introduction of internal borders checks justified by migration pressure and secondary movements, a set of measures should be proposed that would reach the declared objectives of internal borders checks with other means (such as limiting the movement of irregular migrants, monitoring unauthorized movements and sanctioning migrants who are in violation of their terms of stay, and enhancing the cooperation of police forces of Member States in preventing unauthorized movements, for instance by intensified police checks at areas close to the internal border areas). Bilateral police cooperation between EU Member States which have security concerns about their mutual border should be encouraged, as an alternative of re-introduction of border checks. These focused measures should be based on rigorous risk assessment and should not unnecessarily disrupt the free flow of EU citizens and bona fide travellers in the Schengen Area.
2. An EU evaluation of the practices of strengthening land borders with fences and similar devices should be undertaken to establish the effectiveness and impact of such practices and to issue recommendations on their future in EU border management.
3. Regulations should be established to allow the linking of information resources to combat terrorism, irregular migration and international organized crime, involving the collaboration of all authorities with a stake in border management, such as anti-terrorist and national security agencies, migration, customs, and border authorities.

EU FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

1. Funding for the consistent implementation and utilisation of the EES, with specific emphasis on covering any weak spots at the external borders that might render the whole system ineffective.
2. Funding for the deployment of the ETIAS and for enhancing information system interoperability (SISII, VIS, EURODAC, EES), with focus on Member States which are behind schedule in connecting their national components of the systems.
3. The deployment of biometric matching service should be prioritized, to address travel and identity fraud (e.g. third-country nationals registered with multiple identities in various EU and national systems).
4. Funding for activities in third countries, including joint operations with border authorities in gatekeeper states to enhance border surveillance capacities.

IMPACT OF STRATEGIC SHOCKS:

The scenario *MORE OF THE SAME* is a projection of current trends and therefore contains in itself the aftermath of two strategic shocks, one external and one internal: the migration wave of 2015-2016, and the 2016 referendum in the UK to leave the EU. It is uncertain whether the measures taken by the EU in response to these shocks will mitigate the effect of future shocks of similar nature and scope, i.e. another migration wave with over a million migrants within a year, or another exit of a key Member State. **Overall, the occurrence of one or multiple strategic shocks under this scenario would have a strongly negative impact, as the EU is poorly prepared to meet additional challenges.**

2.2. Scenario MULTI-SPEED EU

Political context: divided EU, globalisation reversed

EU is divided into various camps, with each camp bound by some form of alliance agreement (e.g. Visegrad, Scandinavian, Member States at the periphery, etc.)[30]. Some of the Member States are on the verge of leaving the Eurozone (either on their own initiative, or due to non-compliance with the Eurozone's requirements). Countries in the north part of the EU maintain consistent (although small) economic growth, with low unemployment, low budget deficits and stable financial systems[31]. Conversely, Member States in the south suffer recurring recession, high unemployment, chronic budget deficits and unstable financial systems[32]. Member States in Central and Eastern Europe have low unemployment and low budget deficits, but household incomes grows too slowly and their population continues to shrink due to migration to more affluent Member States[33].

Far-right and nationalist parties govern in many Member States, but even mainstream coalitions maintain anti-immigration policies[34]. Member States with high GDP introduce various forms of internal border control and restrictions in their labour markets, including restrictions affecting EU citizens from other Member States. The EU enlargement processes have been discontinued, and the governments of key Member States seek re-negotiation of the terms of their membership (in response to nationalist, anti-EU attitudes in their constituencies). EU solidarity funds are severely cut and are mostly used for deals with gatekeeper states and countries of origin in the Middle East and Africa, with the objective to make their government limit migration to a minimum. On the other hand, NATO members have increased their defence budgets to reach the 2% goal and many EU Member States take part in peace missions outside Europe. Globalisation is reversed and countries which have traditionally accepted refugees and migrants, e.g. the USA and Australia are trying to close as much as possible their borders to the outside world[35].

Migration pressure: uneven pressure, no relocation of new arrivals

Migration pressure remains strong at the southern and south-eastern external borders, but decreases for the northern European countries. Instead, Member States at the southern and south-eastern external borders bear all the consequences of newly arriving migrants, as they cannot continue their way to the north and relocation quotas are not effectively enforced. On both sides of the EU external borders, high numbers of migrants are held in closed type reception centres, or in zones over which governments have little or no control[36]. Member States which perceive the increased migration flows as a threat have deployed military forces at their borders and have legalized the practice of push-backs. While core Member States dedicate significant resources to the integration of migrants, in the rest of the EU integration is at a critically low level, as most migrants are either unemployed or employed in low-paid jobs and accommodated in underdeveloped urban or separate rural areas. Destination Member States follow their own policies of return of migrants and strike bilateral

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[30] In line with *Legal Borders Scenario* and core-periphery tendencies in both *Perseverance* and *Metamorphosis* scenarios, FLAGSHIP (March 15, 2016), Forward Looking Analysis of Grand Societal Challenges and Innovative Policies, FP7-SSH-2012-2

[31] Bogdanor, V. (May 1, 2016). "Europe is moving ever closer to Britain", *The Financial Times Online*.

[32] Stratfor. (July 12, 2017). The Gap Widens Between Europe's North and South. *Stratfor Online*.

[33] Michel Foucher, L'Union européenne au défi de ses frontières (November 2016, Le Monde Diplomatique)

[34] Adler, K. (April 28, 2016). Is Europe lurching to the far right?, *The BBC Online*.

[35] Broken Men in Paradise (New York Times, 09.1.22016); Steven Blaney Wants to Reduce Canada's Immigration, Refugee Targets (4 January 2017, Huffington Post – Canada) – Canadian Conservative leadership hopeful Steven Blaney speaks out against government stance on migration.

[36] Angenendt, S. et al (2016). *Border Security, Camps, Quotas: The Future of European Refugee Policy?* German Institute for International and Security Affairs.

agreements with gatekeeper states and countries of origin, but Member States at the periphery cannot take advantage of a common EU policy. The share of effective returns of illegal migrants has become a central issue for the stability of destination Member States. Centres for temporary accommodation of migrants who are awaiting to be returned but are not re-admitted by their countries of origin, are set up in the periphery Member States or in gatekeeper states, and are financed by funds from destination Member States from Northern and Western Europe.

Along with the migratory pressure from irregular border crossings, large numbers of third country nationals enter the EU legally but stay illegally beyond the expiry of their short-stay visa or national permit of stay. This trend may be a displacement effect of the efforts to close the gaps at external green and blue borders. For instance, student visas for universities in Member States which have lower tuition fees and lower cost of living may be abused for entry in the EU, with the intention to later settle in countries in Western and Northern Europe. As a response, the countries of destination introduce restrictions designed to limit the number of foreign students and foreign employees.

Core Member States set up special task forces for combatting of smuggling of migrants, with sporadic participation from the rest of the Member States.

Border management: slowdown in cooperation, fragmentation by camps

Cooperation in border management is limited to Member States within the core camp, while constant tension persists between the core and periphery camps. While most Member States agree on expanding the role of the EBCG Agency, only some of them actively contribute to its financing and provide personnel and equipment. As a result of recurring peaks in migration pressure from irregular border crossings, the EBCG Agency's budget and available human resources are increased. A critical function of the Agency becomes to guarantee the quality of border control exercised by Member States at the maritime and land external borders, as destination countries in Northern and Western Europe complain that migrants who have crossed the southern and south-eastern borders irregularly are not systematically registered, or that travel or identity fraud is not consistently detected (due to lack of capacity at BCPs, corrupt practices of border guards, or even as part of a 'wave through' policy to not detain migrants who are only transiting a given Member State)[37].

Member States at the periphery build border fences and advanced surveillance systems (allowing for remote recognition and analysis of passengers and vehicles approaching the land borders). Core Member States use mostly early warning electronic systems at their internal borders, thus establishing a second, virtual surveillance band at national borders within the EU.

Electronic systems for full control of national borders are implemented, further connecting border police, immigration and police databases, however the exchange of information among all Member States is selective, also due to the tensions between the various camps of Member States. While terrorism-related data is fully shared among all Member States, migration-related data is shared only among core Member States. The implementation and use of information sharing systems is uneven throughout the Union, both in terms of timing and scope of usage[38]. In some Member States, advance travellers' information (e.g. data provided through ETIAS) is used to expedite border checks, while in others the information is only used for anti-terrorist purposes. The introduction of EU-wide

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[37] Dearden, L. (Sept 8, 2016). Refugee crisis: Fences failing to stop asylum seekers arriving in Europe as migrants take covert routes, *The Independent Online;* Rusev, Atanas, Human Trafficking, Border Security and Related Corruption in the EU, DCAF Brussels, October 2013

[38] Fägersten, B. (2016). For EU eyes only? Intelligence and European security. *European Union Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) – Brief Issue 8*.

information systems is effective in the core Member States, however in the rest of the EU it is slowed down by disagreements on priorities and compromises between security and privacy concerns (e.g. concerning the use and storing of biometrics, big data, etc.).

Technology developments: difference in implementation speed

Available innovations are implemented with various speeds and to various extents by Member States, as their financial means, interests and priorities often diverge – for instance, the introduction of the Entry-Exit System is favoured by destination countries in Western and Northern Europe but opposed by countries of initial entry. Member States differ in the degree of utilization of technological innovations. In some Member States, border checks deploy face recognition and biometrics techniques within integrated transportation and police records information systems. In others, the integration of systems is not allowed due to data privacy concerns. A third group of Member States is not taking full advantage of the available options for integration due to insufficient financial funds.

Core Member States utilise new surveillance technologies in monitoring their internal borders (sensors, systems of cameras, recognition software). Surveillance of the external borders is performed through unmanned aircraft systems and small satellites, but information from these systems is not widely shared among all Member States and with neighbouring countries due to lack of mutual trust.

EU POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Under the *MULTI-SPEED EU* scenario, the implementation of common border management and visa policies would face the challenge to balance between diverging priorities of a core of Member States and a periphery. The EU funds should be used for actions and investments that overcome the differences between camps and contribute to the integration of border management rather than re-enforcing the differences between the camps. The root causes for measures that endanger the future of free movement in the Schengen Area (such as construction of fences, re-introduction of internal border control or limited exchange of security information among the various camps of Member States) would need to be clearly identified. Potential solutions could be mediated by the EBCG Agency or by multi-lateral bodies of the Member States involved in the specific problem area (for instance, disagreements between core and periphery Member States in handling overstayers and secondary movements of irregular migrants, or lack of trust between Member States due to diverging standards in the processing of private data).

1. Expanding and enforcing the role of the EBCG Agency in monitoring and reporting performance flaws observed in national border guard services, to eliminate the weakest links in the protection of external borders (e.g. lack of human or technical capacity to perform thorough border checks or to utilise fully the new or upgraded information systems, such as EES and ETIAS). Non-cooperation with the EBCG Agency should involve financial and political sanctions, such as withholding of EU funds and exclusion from joint initiatives, shared information resources and decision making on common border management policies.
2. Further enhancement of the EBCG Agency's role to operate in third countries, providing capacity building, joint patrols and support in inter-agency cooperation in combatting human smuggling networks in neighbouring third countries, including North Africa, Middle East, and Western Balkans.
3. Improving policies on response to irregular migration pressure at the green and blue borders: best practices in protection of borders in case of massive attempts at irregular border crossings.

EU FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

1. Ensure adequate funding to respond to the strong migration pressure at the southern and south-eastern external borders, including through deployment of personnel and equipment from other Member States in support of the maritime and land borders on the migration routes.
2. Dedicated funding for upgrades of existing information systems (VIS, SISII, EURODAC), and for the gradual roll out of new systems (EES, ETIAS). Member States which are not implementing upgrades or are behind schedule in introducing new systems may be allocated additional funding for these specific objectives, or a percent may be specified in national programmes for upgrades and new information systems.
3. Funding for new types of border surveillance equipment, such as unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) - purchase of aircraft, integration of information from UAS, training of personnel.
4. Funding for connecting information systems of agencies with a stake in border management (police, migration, customs agencies, national security/anti-terrorist agencies). Funding for completing the integration of national information systems in EU-wide integrated systems serving border management, migration, customs, and police.

IMPACT OF STRATEGIC SHOCKS

Under the *MULTI-SPEED EU* scenario, the cohesion of the EU is very fragile, and the Union is kept together by both formal and informal agreements that allow Member States to follow different policies that best suit their national interests and that reflect their unequal position in terms of political and economic power within the EU. In this state of the EU, strategic shocks, both from internal and external sources, would have radical impact, and would deepen the contradictions and diverging practices of Member States. **As in the** *MORE OF THE SAME* **scenario, the EU is poorly prepared to handle strategic shocks and they would pose a significant threat on compliance with existing EU acquis in the areas of border management and common visa policy.**

2.3. Scenario NEW MIGRATION WAVES

Political context: strong euro-sceptics, internal tensions

Under pressure caused by a series of new migration waves (fed by continuing violent conflicts in the EU neighbourhood), the Union is riven by internal contradictions and various degrees of distancing of Member States from common policies not only on migration, but also on economic and security issues[39]. While various groups of Member States with shared interests emerge, national governments dominate the shaping of all major political decisions concerning EU response to the migration crisis. New tensions between Member States with high and low GDP per capita emerge, as funds that have previously been targeted at lower GDP Member States are now diverted to gatekeeper states and countries of origin of migration. As economic fortunes of high and low GDP Member States follow opposite paths, Member States in Northern and Central Europe are looking for legal ways to curb the influx of low-skilled EU citizens from the less affluent periphery of the Union (e.g. by offering temporary contracts or limiting certain social benefits[40]). On their part, low GDP Member States try to block common policies and standards elaborated by the richer Member States (e.g. concerning energy

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[39] Cf. the *Millennium* project scenario "Political/Economic Turmoil – Future Despair", 2050 Global Work/Technology Scenarios (2016)

[40] Germany limits EU citizens' access to benefits (Deutsche Welle, 12.10.2016, http://dw.com/p/2RAAI)

policies and the environment).

Attitudes to migrants continue to fluctuate and diverge across the EU, from strongly negative in certain Member States, to consistently positive in others. Nationalist, euro-sceptic and anti-mainstream attitudes are getting stronger, in particular in areas which have not benefited from the economic upturn. EU integration remains under threat, with exit from the EU still being part of the political agenda of some Member States.

Migration pressure: new waves, new routes

After a period of relatively low migration pressure, new waves hit the EU from the central and east Mediterranean routes but also through new routes that have seen minimal pressure so far (e.g. at the eastern external borders). Some of the stable gatekeeper states in Northern Africa enter a period of civil turmoil. Unable to control the smuggling networks operating on their territory, these states turn into countries of origin of new migration flows. As Russia tries to assert its influence over countries in the EU neighbourhood (e.g. Turkey, Syria, Libya, Egypt)[41], the EU finds it harder to reach and enforce its cooperation agreements with some of the gatekeeper states. Member States on the route of the migration waves fail to prevent them from entering the EU. Close to the borders, areas inhabited by migrants emerge in which governments have little control[42]. Disagreements on EU migration policy cause serious tensions among Member States, in particular between those of entry or transit and destination countries. Governments with a populist, anti-immigration political agenda confront governments with a more moderate or pro-migration agenda, resulting in the inability of the EU to follow common migration policies, including common policies on border management and visas. Secondary movements of irregular migrants are a constant source of disagreement between Member States at the external borders and neighbouring EU Member States, leading to reintroduction of border checks on internal borders, including border surveillance at internal land borders (e.g. construction of permanent facilities, such as fences or stationary surveillance posts) and even deployment of military units or volunteers for the protection of internal borders. Given these moves, cooperation and integration in the EU is limited to groups of Member States, while relations between these groups and the rest of the Member States are openly hostile.

The policies of return and readmission are fragmented, with Member States with high GDP entering in bilateral or multi-lateral agreements with gatekeeper states and countries of origin. Lacking the clout and resources to reach similar agreements, Member States with lower GDP oppose EU programmes for integration and social support of migrants, by passing legislation that restricts migrants' access to the national labour market and keeps them in closed-type camps[43], blocking their movement within the territory of the respective Member States.

Combating smuggling networks operating at the external borders of the EU is a coordinated effort of all Member States. However, Member States at the periphery do not actively engage in limiting the smuggling networks which facilitates the secondary movement of migrants further to other EU Member States.

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[41] Examples of a possible trend include: Stratfor: Russia Strives to Cover Its Bases (16.10.2016; Russia turns to Libya with show of support for eastern commander (Reuters, 17.01.2017); What is Russia's endgame in Libya? (Aljazeera, 22.01.2017).

[42] Italy on the brink: Warning of Calais-style camps as migrant numbers become 'unmanageable' (Sunday Express, 22.07.2016); Lake Como, Italy, the latest migrant frontline (BBC, 23.08.2016); 90 Prozent der Migranten in Italien klagen über Gewalt (Kurier, Austria, 13.09.2016).

[43] Hungary submits plans to EU to detain all asylum seekers (The Guardian, 07.02.2017)

Border management: uncoordinated response to challenges, emphasis on internal borders

Almost all Member States support the expansion of the mandate and activities of the EBCG Agency. At the same time, most Member States have also enhanced the preparedness of their national border authorities. Cooperation is evolving within a given group of Member States with common interests: e.g. surveillance at the internal borders and deployment of military units in preventing the entry of irregular migrants from neighbouring Member States. In some Member States, voluntary civil patrols (often supported by nationalist parties) are allowed to complement border guards and city police patrols[44]. National border authorities are faced with the challenge to coordinate the activities of military units and voluntary patrols at the borders. Both regular border guards and voluntary patrols engage in push-backs of migrants across national borders. As the practice is reciprocated between neighbouring Member States, migrants' camps spontaneously emerge at border areas. The EBCG Agency mandate is expanded to include mediation in settling border disputes among Member States, for instance the handling of migrants who get blocked at internal borders.

The lack of trust among EU Member States hampers the collaboration of national border agencies and the EBCG Agency with other stakeholders in protecting the external borders (migration, customs, police, national security / anti-terrorist agencies).

Cooperation between Member States in the EU neighbourhood is faltering, as preference by Member States for bilateral agreements in dealing with the migration crisis are undermining the efforts of the EBCG Agency to engage with border and security authorities in gatekeeper states and countries of origin.

Border checks require longer processing times as Member States try to filter potential overstayers by adding new requirements for both visa holders and visa-free travellers entering the EU, causing extremely long waiting times, both at land BCPs and at major international airports. Refusals of entry increase sharply, causing delays at airports and constant tension between border authorities, airport management and carriers. Security concerns prevail over attempts to make border checks faster and simpler for bona fide travellers. New information systems are put on hold. Free movement in the Schengen area gets suspended for extended periods of time.

Technology developments: driven by security concerns, slowed down

Innovations for surveillance at the green and blue borders get prioritized, along with technical devices preventing irregular border crossings and enhancing the control of secondary movements. Pre-occupation with quick results in responding to the migration waves hinders the implementation of equipment and information systems with long-term horizons. Pilot projects are implemented by Member States which are less affected by the migration waves, but full-scale implementation, in particular of innovations that facilitate travellers flows, is postponed.

EU POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Under the *NEW MIGRATION WAVES* scenario EU policies would deal with short-term emergencies, focusing on border surveillance at most vulnerable border sections on the way of the migratory flows, and on mobilizing resources which are normally not involved in the protection of the external border, such as national military units and even voluntary civil patrols. To avoid weaknesses identified in the 2015-2016 migration crisis, capacity at the external borders should be sufficient for the effective processing of all migrants, ensuring expedited returns for those whose applications for asylum are not approved, and preventing secondary movements within the EU of irregular migrants. Missions in third

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[44] http://www.mediapool.bg/kriminalno-proyaveni-otkriha-lovniya-sezon-za-migranti-news247870.html, 11.04.2016

countries on the path of the migration wave would be critical for the control of the migrant pressure.

1. Elaboration of regulations and action plans that would govern the interaction between border authorities and national defence forces (and possibly voluntary civil patrols) engaged in the protection of external borders.
2. As the migration crisis would exert pressure not only on the external borders but also on the EU's internal borders, changes in policies should be made to allow Member States who are most affected by secondary movements of irregular migrants to receive support by the EBCG Agency and by EU funds that have previously been utilised only at the external borders.
3. Expansion of the EBCG Agency's mandate to operate at internal borders along with national border authorities, and to coordinate any disagreements between Member States at the internal borders, in particular those arising from secondary movements of irregular migrants.

EU FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

1. Funding for reinforcing of border surveillance and reaction capacities on the way of new migratory waves, and on border sections which are on the new migratory routes (e.g. along the Eastern EU borders with Russia and Ukraine).
2. Funding for emergency operations of the EBCG Agency in countries of origin, transit and in gatekeeper states to combat smuggling networks and build public awareness of conditions at reception centres.
3. Funding for connecting information systems of agencies with a stake in border management (police, migration, customs agencies, national security and anti-terrorist agencies). Funding for completing the integration of national information systems in EU-wide integrated systems serving border management, migration, customs, and police.

IMPACT OF STRATEGIC SHOCKS

Under the NEW MIGRATION WAVES scenario, similar to the scenario MULTI-SPEED EU, the unity of the EU is at risk. However, this scenario assumes one or more external strategic shocks have been realised and migration pressure has been overwhelming. The disintegration trend within the EU is driven mostly by different approaches that Member States apply to the migration waves. **As with the previous two scenarios, *MORE OF THE SAME* and *MULTI-SPEED EU*, under this scenario the EU is poorly prepared to respond to strategic shocks which can have severe consequences for the future of the Union**.

2.4. Scenario STABILISED EU

Political context: subsiding euro-scepticism, economic stability
Economic growth is modest but stable, national budget deficits are declining, national debt is serviceable. The Euro zone is stabilized through improved control mechanism over national budget deficits and common EU mechanism for issuing of public debt. The gap in GDP per capita among the most affluent and the poorest EU Member States is gradually closing. At the same time, average household income in the most developed Member States resumes small but persistent growth.

The waves of far-right and far-left **populism and Euro-scepticism are subsiding**. The UK exits the EU

but retains its role in various EU initiatives (similar to Norway and Switzerland).

An EU agreement is being implemented for the establishment of an EU armed forces. The process benefits from the increased spending for defence of the NATO countries, following the 2014 Wales Summit (and the NATO guideline to spend a minimum of 2% of respective GDPs). Spurred by the hike in defence budgets, modernized armed units are being deployed on various peace missions in conflicts affecting the EU's neighbourhood, in coordination with international stakeholders.

The EU follows a well-coordinated foreign policy, with particular focus on building economic cooperation with the so-called gatekeeper states. These states, along with key countries of origin, receive financial, military and technical support from the EU to tackle internal developments that could threaten their stability[45].

Migration pressure: less irregular entries, more effective returns

Thanks to coordinated migration and asylum policies of the EU and improved cooperation with gatekeeper states, the migration pressure is declining. Return and readmission efforts are more successful, placing additional disincentives for economically motivated migration.

Member States that are most exposed to the migration pressure receive additional border management assistance from the EBCG Agency, including full control over critical sections of the external borders. While the main levers of influence on gatekeeper states are financial assistance programmes, cooperation in border control is also advancing.

Border management: advances in integration

The integration of border management of the external borders is quickly advancing. Surveillance systems at the external land borders on the Eastern Europe and the Balkans, as well as maritime borders on the south, are fully integrated. The EBCG Agency has proved effective and cost-efficient and its role and powers are expanded, in particular in the protection of risky border sections and in response to critical situations at the external borders. National border guards at border sections with high migration or terrorist pressure work most of the time in joint teams with officers from the EBCG Agency. Re-introduction of border control at the internal borders is not necessary, thanks to the effective control at external borders. Smooth coordination among police and national security agencies of all Member States guarantee detection and interception of smugglers networks and providers of fraudulent travel documents serving irregular migrants or suspected terrorists.

The protection of external borders is supported by a unified system of information sources that cover the criminal groups exploiting the migration flows, from countries of origin through countries of transit to countries of entry and final destination. Systems for early warning and response operate in key gatekeeper states (similar to Spain's efforts in Morocco), providing situational awareness of any migration risks. The EBCG Agency is cooperating closely with both border and security authorities in countries of origin and gatekeeper states. A collaboration mechanism is developed for potential joint reactions to critical situations between the EBCG Agency and the newly formed EU armed forces (in full compliance with the Schengen Borders Code, in particular its Article 16[46]).

The EES is fully implemented by all Member States, making it possible to track the compliance with, or violation of the terms of stay of both visa holders and visa exempt third country nationals entering the EU. Advance information for incoming travellers (consisting of a combination of biometric data contained in travel documents and self-reported information which is further verified), along with

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[45] Défense européenne: Hollande propose une "coopération structurée" (5 March 2017, La Parisien).
[46] Regulation (EU) 2016/399

integration of EU and national security information systems, allows for smooth and reliable border checks, with fast entry for pre-screened bona fide travellers. At the same time, more thorough checks are performed on passengers who are highlighted as a potential security risk.

Technology developments: faster implementation

Implementation rates get faster, as Member States are able to agree and follow common objectives in border management. Advances are made in the use of sensors and drones, low flying satellites for surveillance of maritime and land borders; face recognition and other techniques for speeding up border checks; surveillance of telecommunication between smugglers networks, etc. Complex software systems are deployed to provide early warnings on travellers posing security risks through monitoring of social media networks, financial transactions, data from transportation companies, etc. As migration flows get under control, more efforts are dedicated to facilitating bona fide passenger traffic and detecting travel document and identity fraud, while irregular border crossings become less of a concern and investments in border surveillance is no longer seen as top priority.

EU POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policy measures under the *STABILISED EU* scenario should focus on building capacities for the long-term, giving priority to technical innovations and systems upgrades that guarantee smooth border crossing experience for bona fide travellers and interoperability and interconnection of data from all institutions in charge of the external and internal security of the Union. At the same time, monitoring of potential external threats should continue, and the EBCG Agency should dedicate significant resources to cooperation with border authorities in third countries. Member States should start elaborating common visa policies for long-term visas.

1. Policy priorities should shift from emphasis on curbing irregular border crossings and strengthening the external maritime and land borders to prevention of illegal migration through legal channels, with more efficient fight against travel document and identity fraud and against violations of terms of permitted stay.
2. Changes in the Schengen Borders Code and the Schengen Handbook should reflect the gradual transition from systematic checks of all passengers crossing the external borders to customized checks based on risk analysis and advance travellers' information verified by checks in integrated information systems.
3. The EBCG Agency, in cooperation with border and security authorities in gatekeeper states and in countries of origin should set up an early warning system that would monitor the threat of any massive migration flows. Such efforts should be undertaken in North Africa and in the Middle East, probably in Ukraine, and also in any other region that might emerge as a source of migration pressure. In addition, joint teams with border authorities of gatekeeper states may be negotiated for surveillance at the most risky sections of the borders and for combatting smugglers networks.
4. Regulations should be established to allow the linking of information resources to combat terrorism, irregular migration and international organized crime, involving the collaboration of all agencies which have a stake in border management, such as anti-terrorist and national security agencies, migration, customs, and border authorities. Protection of private data should be an integral part of these regulations.
5. Common visa policy for long-term stay may be considered, along with sharing information on third country nationals who have been granted long-term visas for stay in the EU.

EU FUNDING IMPLICATIONS

1. Funding for implementation of technological innovations aimed at facilitating the passenger flow, such as automatic border checks and remote identification of travellers and vehicles at land BCPs.
2. Funding for training of border guards in implementing border checks based on risk analysis; funding for capacity building in the collection, processing and use of advance travellers' information.
3. Funding for completing the interoperability of border management information systems, and for linking information resources of various institutions (anti-terrorist and national security agencies, migration, customs, and border authorities) into an integrated information system for combating terrorism, irregular migration and international organized crime.
4. Funding for developing and implementation of cooperation programmes with border authorities and security agencies in gatekeeper states and countries of origin; funding for EBCG Agency missions and long-term deployment of joint teams in third countries.

IMPACT OF STRATEGIC SHOCKS

Under the STABILISED EU scenario, unlike the other three scenarios, the EU is well prepared to meet strategic shocks both of external and internal nature, thanks to the early identification of upcoming threats and the ability to quickly and effectively mobilise all border management and security resources of the Union.

Part III. Conclusions and recommendations

In this part of the report we analyse the scenario narratives and implications to highlight the key challenges that the EU could face under the various scenarios, and to present a set of recommendations that would be the best response to these challenges.

3.1. Conclusions

It is beyond the scope of this study to assign a probability to each of the scenarios, or to each of the specific developments outlined in the four scenarios. Instead, we have grouped the key challenges discussed in the scenarios based on the following two criteria:

- **Recurrence:** Which challenges and developments are occurring under multiple scenarios?
- **High impact:** Which challenges and developments, even if not very likely and occurring under a single scenario, would have a high impact?

The following developments, with various degrees of intensity, occur under multiple scenarios. Due to their recurrence, policy and funding implications for these developments should be taken into account regardless of which single scenario, or combination of scenarios, is realised beyond 2020.

Area of uncertainty	Recurring Developments
Migratory pressure	1) Overall cooperation with gatekeeper states and countries of origin of irregular migrants would face challenges due to both external factors and to the policies followed by the EU in these countries; bilateral agreements (as opposed to agreements with the EU) may have a displacement effect (re-directing irregular migrants from some Member States to others). 2) Secondary movements of irregular migrants within the EU would trigger further re-introduction of border checks at internal borders and would challenge the stability of the Schengen Agreement. 3) Abuse of regular entry into the EU may become a source of migration pressure, along with irregular entry through BCPs (document and identity fraud)[47].
Border management integration	4) Expansion of the role of the EBCG Agency may be opposed by certain Member States whose border management priorities differ from agreed EU priorities. 5) Universal and timely introduction of new information systems (EES, ETIAS), upgrades of existing systems, and achieving interoperability of new and existing systems may be slowed down by various degrees of commitment and speed of implementation by Member States. 6) The stability of the Schengen Agreement may be challenged by frequent re-introduction of internal borders checks and construction of fences or other facilities at the internal borders designed to limit free movement of people in the Schengen area.
Common visa policy	7) While demand for Schengen visa and travel to the EU is expected to remain strong, amendments to the Visa Code aimed at facilitating the visa application and issuing process, combined with potential expansion of the list of visa-

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[47] While the number of detections of illegal stay is reported by Frontex (491,891 in 2016), no data is available on the share of overstayers (as opposed to those who have entered the EU irregularly). However, there is sufficient evidence that not all illegal stay is the result of irregular entry (Frontex. Risk Analysis for 2017).

	exempt third countries, are likely to streamline visa processing and ease the burden on consulates.
Technological innovations	8) Available innovations that can significantly improve border checks processes and border surveillance may be only partially implemented due to diverging priorities of Member States or due to reaction to immediate threats that divert resources for long-term upgrades.

The following developments were selected as high-impact challenges to which the EU should be prepared to respond due to the critical consequences they would have, regardless how likely these developments may seem at present.

Area of uncertainty	High-impact Developments
Migratory pressure	1) New migratory waves, utilising existing and new routes, hit the EU (e.g. from land borders with Russia or Ukraine). 2) Reception centres for migrants get overcrowded, with large masses of migrants blocked on both sides of the external borders, or at internal borders within the EU.
Border management integration	3) Ad hoc support from national armed forces and from civil organisations is needed (in full compliance with the Schengen Borders Code) in situations of sudden increase in migratory flows (e.g. for humanitarian assistance to migrants or other auxiliary tasks at the external borders). 4) The EBCG Agency gets involved in resolving disputes at internal borders among Member States related to push-backs of irregular migrants. 5) Border guards are burdened with additional requirements for border checks, unilaterally introduced by Member States as a response to very high migratory pressure, requiring longer processing times at BCPs.

3.2. Recommendations

The recommendations we suggest are designed to better enable the EU address both the possible recurring and the high-impact developments that were highlighted in the previous section. These are the 'must-have' steps which would prepare the EU for the anticipated risks and challenges in the areas of border management and common visa policy, as seen from today's perspective.

The developed scenarios can be used as a broad guideline for the possible future. Monitoring indicators of migration pressure and ongoing risk assessments for border management (e.g. the quarterly and annual risk analyses of the EBCG Agency), policy makers would be able to determine to what extent the observed trends correspond to developments envisioned in the scenarios and to what extent the recommended steps are applicable in the respective context.

Our recommendations are also structured to reflect the current funding priorities of ISF Borders and Visa, and the direction in which they may be revised in the next MFF. In particular, we have highlighted 1) funding priorities which are being supported under the ISF Borders and should be continued; 2) new funding priorities (areas with little or no funding under the current ISF Borders); and 3) existing funding priorities which may be of less importance under the next MFF. Finally, we suggest some changes in the horizontal management of the future fund.

EXPLICIT PRIORITIES	1. **Purchase of equipment, vehicles, vessels and aircraft (including UAS) by Member States to be at the disposal of the EBCG Agency** for joint operations, emergency assistance and maritime operations or operations in third countries.
	2. **Support for upgrading of existing IT and communications systems** (SISII, VIS, EURODAC) and **for roll out of emerging systems** (such as the EES and the ETIAS).
	3. **Support for EUROSUR**, with focus on the Mediterranean migratory routes and Eastern and South-Eastern land borders (borders with Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Russia, Turkey and the Western Balkans). In particular, funding should support:
	a. Purchase of new and upgrades of existing ground, air-borne and sea-borne surveillance systems and equipment to increase ability to monitor the blue borders, including UAS and equipment for detection of small boats; further development of the surveillance infrastructure at the green borders through investments in stationary and mobile surveillance systems and connectivity with local and national coordination centres; funding for integration of information derived from new surveillance sources (e.g. UAS), and for training of personnel.
	b. Purchase and maintenance of transportation means utilized at the external borders: ships and patrol boats to increase reaction capabilities of border authorities at existing and new migratory maritime routes, as identified by national and EBCG Agency's risk analysis; purchase and maintenance of all-road vehicles for patrolling the green borders;
	c. Actions, equipment and training to enhance cooperation between national border authorities, EBCG Agency and national and EU maritime agencies monitoring movements in the Mediterranean (such as naval forces, EMSA, port authorities and search and rescue organizations);
	d. Actions to improve the infrastructure at critical border sections to enable the maintenance of surveillance systems and enhance reaction capacities of border guards.
OTHER TOP PRIORITIES	4. **Support for upgrades and replacement of operational equipment and tools** aimed at achieving interoperability of communications systems or other surveillance and mobility assets to enhance capability for joint operations and initiatives at the blue and green borders by Member States and EU agencies.
	5. **Investment in BCP information systems and devices:**
	a. Investments in systems and devices that increase the reliability and automation of border checks, including fast-processing systems for capture of biometric data and innovative methods for remote checks of persons and vehicles through several layers of border control (before and after crossing of physical borders);
	b. Enhancement of access to information systems at BCPs, upgrades of equipment and infrastructure to utilize new functionality of existing systems, such as processing of biometric data in SISII, and new systems.
	6. **Support for enhancing border management capacities, including prevention of irregular migration in "gatekeeper" states and countries of origin and transit.**

	7. Funding for implementation of the proposed amendments in the Visa Code: investments in training and ICT equipment and systems for streamlining visa application and issuing process (e.g. visas for frequent travellers, online applications, E-visas, etc.). At the same time, in the long run the implementation of these amendments should lead to more efficient use of consular resources and smaller need for overall operational support (keeping in mind that certain large countries with high growth in Schengen visa demand may still require the expansion of visa processing facilities and additional personnel).
	8. Funding for training of visa processing personnel, in particular in response to: the introduction of new or upgrading of existing information systems (e.g. utilization of risk analysis based on data from the EES); the deployment of new equipment or upgrades of existing equipment used in taking and processing of biometric data of visa applicants; collaboration with third parties involved in processing of visa application.
	9. Funding for new or upgrading of existing IT infrastructure and equipment at consulates to be compatible with technical requirements of new or upgraded information systems (e.g. processing of biometric data, use of the EES). The security of key ICT systems will require targeted funding, including safeguards and mechanisms against malicious cyber activities.
	10. Sustained funding for enhancement of capacities to detect document fraud at consulates, including maintenance and improvement of anti-fraud related databases and information exchanges such as PRADO and FADO, adoption of improved biometric means of identification and verification of visa applicants, training and employment of document advisors in consular representations.

NEW FUNDING PRIORITIES OR NEW EMPHASIS ON EXISTING PRIORITIES

NEW PRIORITY	**11. Systems, equipment and actions to control secondary movements of irregular migrants within the EU:** Investments in surveillance, communication and mobility systems aimed at preventing irregular secondary movement of migrants within the EU.
NEW EMPHASIS	**12. Support for checks on persons within the territory (compensatory measures).**
	13. Enhanced support for actions in third countries by Member States and the EBCG Agency, in particular:
	a. Actions to increase surveillance and reaction capacities of border authorities in gatekeeper states (in specific, countries in Northern Africa and newly emerging countries of origin and transit, based on national and EBCG Agency's risk analysis);
	b. Actions in cooperation with third countries (countries of origin and transit in North Africa, Middle East and the Western Balkans,), including joint operations to target human smuggling and prevention of irregular migration to the EU.
	14. Incentives for consular cooperation: as the possibility to use current ISF funding for consular cooperation has not been taken up to a great extent by Member States, in the new MFF a minimal % could be considered for

	actions leading to expansion of geographical coverage through setting up of CACs, or other types of incentives.

LESS CRITICAL AREAS

The areas which may be less critical in the next MFF are identified based on current trends, allocations in the national programmes of the ISF-Borders, and the implications of the developed scenarios. An important consideration in deciding the level of funding should be the rates of implementation of actions included in the national programmes, and, in the case of funding of actions related to the common visa policy, the dynamics of demand for Schengen visas and changes in the list of visa exempt countries.

EUROSUR (10% requirement)

In the current ISF-Borders, there is a requirement for at least 10% allocations for actions related to EUROSUR (Art.6.2). A review of the actual allocations indicates that 10 Member States did not follow this requirement, while only four Member States (Spain, Greece, Italy and France) accounted for 69% of all allocations for EUROSUR actions. While we do recommend to continue the funding of EUROSUR related actions in the Mediterranean and at the Eastern land borders, we do not recommend a 10% minimum requirement for all Member States, in particular for those which do not have external land or maritime borders experiencing migratory pressure. The decision on the EUROSUR allocations should also take into account the findings of the upcoming evaluation of EUROSUR.

NATIONAL CAPACITIES AND OPERATIONAL SUPPORT (BORDERS)

The allocations for national objectives and the eligible percentage for operational support should be decreased, as these categories allow for too wide interpretation of eligible actions and expenses. Instead of capping national capacities at 25% and operational support at 40%, we suggest to lower these ceilings to 15% and 30% respectively, and at the same time to increase the required combined share of border surveillance and BCP infrastructure (which may be part of EUROSUR) and EBCG Agency commitment (e.g. equipment committed to be at the disposal of the EBCG Agency). The logic in combining the share of EUROSUR and EBCG Agency related actions is that Member States which no longer need to build surveillance capacity (have no land or maritime external borders at risk), can instead contribute assets to be available to the EBCG Agency, and vice versa – Member States in need of strengthening their border surveillance capacities would invest less in assets for EBCG Agency use.

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT (COMMON VISA POLICY)

Assuming the proposed amendments to the Visa Code produce the desired impact, in the long run they would lead to more efficient use of consular resources and less need for operational support, as overall number of Schengen visa applications may fall thanks to larger share of multiple entry visas and adding of more countries to the visa-exempt list. (At the same time it should be noted that certain large countries with high growth in Schengen visa demand may still require the expansion of visa processing facilities and additional personnel).

FUTURE CHALLENGES

We recommend not to include a separate objective for upcoming challenges and future threats. In the current ISF-Borders, only six Member States have planned actions under this heading, with a total of EUR 10.8 million. Furthermore, all other specific objectives in one way or another should prepare national border authorities to face future challenges, so this separate objective does not seem necessary.

TWO MID-TERM REVIEWS

Under the current ISF-Borders, there is one mid-term review three years after the launching of the fund. In reality, for most Member States this equates to less than two years of actual implementation of their annual programmes. Given the high dynamics of the major factors that would influence the areas of border management and visa (migration pressure, level of cooperation between Member States, demand for Schengen visas), we recommend a second mid-term review at the end of the fifth year of the fund (in case the next MFF will be a seven year one), with the option to revise and finetune specific objectives and allocations in the annual programmes in line with observed trends and identified needs at national and EU level.

Electronically signed on 10/07/2018 17:00 (UTC+02) in accordance with article 4.2 (Validity of electronic documents) of Commission Decision 2004/563

Page | 35

HOME/2016/PR/MFF/0001, Lot 2