

**OPERATIONS DIVISION
Joint Operations Unit
LAND BORDERS SECTOR**

Operational Plan (Main part)

**JO Flexible Operational Activities 2016 Land
on Border Checks
2016/LBS/04**

Prepared by

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Operational Manager

Approved by

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Signature

Berndt Körner

Deputy Executive Director

Commented [A1]: The non-disclosed text contains personal data, in particular the name of an individual. Its disclosure would affect the privacy and integrity of the individual. Therefore, its disclosure is precluded pursuant to the exception laid down in Article 4(1)(b) of Regulation (EC) No 1049/2001.



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1. INTRODUCTION

The Operational Plan has been agreed with the authorities of the host Member State¹, in consultation with the authorities of the home Member States participating in the joint operation coordinated by Frontex. It covers all necessary elements for a proper and timely organization of the joint operation coordinated by Frontex.

The part of the Operational Plan related to the registration package module has been agreed with the authorities of the host Member State², in consultation with the authorities of the home Member States participating in the operation coordinated by Frontex. It covers all necessary elements for a proper and timely organization of the operation on registration package module coordinated by Frontex.

The Operational Plan is composed of the Main part, General and Specific Annexes to the Operational Plan. The Main part, General and Specific Annexes are an integral part of the Operational Plan, having the same importance and legal binding character.

Main part and Specific Annex of the Operational Plan contain detailed and specific information related to the particular joint operation, while General Annex to the Operational Plan encloses operational information applicable to all joint land borders operations. General and Specific Annexes complement the Main part of the Operational Plan by providing complete and comprehensive description of the implementation of the joint operation.

The Main part and Specific Annex of Operational Plan are marked as "Limited" without prejudice to the public right of access to documents as laid down in Regulation (EC) 1049/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 May 2001, regarding public access to European Parliament, Council and Commission documents, while the General Annexes to the Operational Plan has no classification mark indicated.

Operational Plan shall only be made available to the authorities referred in each MS as "Law Enforcement". This document shall be made available to other interested parties only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with European and national rules on the protection of sensitive/classified information. Such dissemination of this document shall be done only on a case-by-case basis.

This Operational Plan may be revised at any time in order to correspond with the new operational developments. In accordance with Article 3a (2) of Frontex Regulation, any amendments to or adaptations of the Operational Plan require the agreement of the Frontex Executive Director and the host MS. A copy of the amended Operational Plan shall be immediately distributed by Frontex to the participating MS via FOSS.

The Legal framework of Frontex, Fundamental rights in Frontex coordinated activities and Code of conduct can be found in General Annexes.

2. DESCRIPTION AND ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION

The operational areas of this JO are Border Crossing Points (BCP) located on the road and railway connections at the external land border of the Member States. Based on the findings and the forecast of the Annual Risk Analysis (ARA), the vulnerabilities identified combined with the requests from Member States (MS), led to the establishment of Focal Points (FP) not only as an operational response to the pressure

¹ For the purposes of the present document, the term "Member State" includes also the States participating in the relevant development of the Schengen acquis in the meaning of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and its Protocol (No 19) on the Schengen acquis integrated into the framework of the European Union.

² For the purposes of the present document, the term "Member State" includes also the States participating in the relevant development of the Schengen acquis in the meaning of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union and its Protocol (No 19) on the Schengen acquis integrated into the framework of the European Union.

of illegal migration but also as a coordinating and monitoring tool which supported other Frontex coordinated operational activities and Member States.

The thorough assessment of the situation can be found in the Specific Annex 1.

3. OPERATIONAL AIM AND OBJECTIVES

3.1. Operational aim

The operational aim of the joint operation is to implement coordinated operational activities at the external land borders of the host Member States in order to control irregular migration flows towards the territory of the MS and to tackle cross border crime.

JO Flexible Operational Activities Land 2016 on border checks will be implemented at external land borders by deploying a Joint Border Check Teams to the selected Focal Points, according to the risk analysis.

The Joint Operation will be implemented with the aim to provide a constant operational presence at the specific Focal Points located in the operational areas facing high irregular migration pressure and/or having the higher passengers traffic and high numbers related to the cross-border crimes detected at the border crossing points.

Within the JO Flexible Operational Activities on border checks the deployments (and redeployments if necessary) of the Joint Border Check Teams consisting of two or three Seconded Guest Officers with the different profiles will be implemented in the course of 2016. The risk assessment and emerging operational needs at the particular Focal Points will be considered prior the deployments in order to provide tailored and efficient operational support to the host MSs.

The operational aims will be implemented in full compliance with the relevant EU law, including the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the relevant international law, including the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees from 1951, the respect for fundamental rights in particular the access to international protection and the compliance with the principle of non-refoulement and taking into account the recommendations of the Frontex Consultative Forum.

3.2. Operational objectives

- Enhance border security
- Enhance operational cooperation
- Enhance exchange of information
- Identify possible risks and threats
- Establish and exchange best practices
- Support establishment of permanent structures
- Support provision of trainings

The main objectives of joint operation will be achieved by combining different type of operational activities at border checks, particularly: thorough control of the authenticity of documents and checking vehicles' legality of the origin. Therefore, document experts and stolen vehicles experts will perform tasks as joined teams at Border Crossing Points.

Frontex will support the Member States with the implementation of the Common Risk Indicators in order to detect suspected travels of Foreign Terrorist Fighters (FTF) as part of all operations that are conducted at the BCPs.

The Common Risk Indicators and explanatory notes are inserted in Specific Annex 1.

The detailed information regarding operational objectives and indicators is provided in Specific Annex 2.

3.3. Vega Children - Land Borders

With the aim to support Border Guards with practical indications on how to effectively identify children in need of protection, the Vega Children Handbook for Land Borders Operations is going to be developed in cooperation with the Host MSs and other relevant stakeholders and used within the framework of Land Borders joint operations and pilot projects in 2016, based on the best practices already experienced in Air Borders in relation to the "VEGA Children Handbook". When finalized during Land Borders Sector Host Country Network Conference, the implementation will start in the ongoing joint operation.

4. OPERATIONAL CONCEPT

The activities during the operation include deployment of human resources - Seconded Guest Officers - in order to:

- Enhance border checks at designated border crossing points;
- Share experiences and exchange expertise as well as to constantly update knowledge on the illegal migration trends in order to adopt countermeasures to tackle the phenomena;
- Collect and assess information in order to improve the detection of human smuggling and trafficking in human beings facilitation by individuals and/or criminal networks and assist wherever possible identification and detention of facilitators;
- Provide with a clear and updated situational picture concerning the operational areas, modus operandi, main trends and possible rapid changes in this respect;
- Carry out daily and ad-hoc exchange of information between Frontex and all operational actors and structures involved;
- Promote the inter-agency cooperation and cooperation with other international and EU bodies and Third Countries.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1. Tasks

Based on the operational needs and in accordance with the relevant national law (particularly Regulation (EC) No 562/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 March 2006 - Schengen Borders Code) as well as with the internal regulations of the national Border Guard Services, during the joint operation implementation the following tasks may be requested to be carry out by the participating officers:

- to assist at performing border checks in joint teams consisting of officer of police, services of the host MSs, special advisers and observers and share expertise on in this regard
- to support the first and second line checks
- to profile passengers in order to detect irregular migrants and victims of cross-border crime
- to detect false/falsified documents and other kinds of cross -border criminality
- to detect stolen vehicles in cooperation with the competent authorities
- to share experience and exchange expertise with officers from the border guard service of the host MS.
- To participate in security body searches and evidence collection

- To consult databases

For detailed overview of the operational tasks and activities please refer to the Specific Annex 3.

5.2. Period of implementation³

Commencement	2 March 2016	12:00 (local time)
Termination	7 December 2016	24:00 (local time)

5.3. Additional information

Operational briefing general part will be performed according to the invitation sent by Frontex as following:

- 28-29 June 2016, Briefing Meeting for Focal Point Guest Officers, Seconded Guest Officers and Coordination Points EU experts (deployed in the period from 20 July to 31 December 2015);

Operational briefing national part will be performed for participants during the first days of deployment.

Operational debriefing will be performed twice a year according to the invitation sent by Frontex as following:

- 27 June 2016, Debriefing for Seconded Guest Officers deployed in the first half of the year;
- Beginning of 2017, Debriefing for Seconded Guest Officers deployed in the second half of the year.

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Travelling day	1 Mar	29 Mar	26 Apr	24 May	21 Jun	19 Jul	16 Aug	13 Sep	11 Oct	8 Nov
Operational (national) briefing	2 Mar	30 Mar	27 Apr	25 May	22 Jun	20 Jul	17 Aug	14 Sep	12 Oct	9 Nov
Operational days	2 Mar 30 Mar	30 Mar 27 Apr	27 Apr 25 May	25 May 22 Jun	22 Jun 20 Jul	20 Jul 17 Aug	17 Aug 14 Sep	14 Sep 12 Oct	12 Oct 9 Nov	9 Nov 7 Dec
Operational debriefing	30 Mar	27 Apr	25 May	22 Jun	20 Jul	17 Aug	14 Sep	12 Oct	9 Nov	7 Dec
Travelling day	31 Mar	28 Apr	26 May	23 Jun	21 Jul	18 Aug	15 Sep	13 Oct	10 Nov	8 Dec

Seconded Guest Officers should also attend briefings of regional Joint Operations taking place in the same area with involvement of Focal Point.

5.4. Operational areas⁴

No	Focal Point	Border section
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³ Foreseeable duration of the joint operation as indicated in the Article 3a (1) (b) of the Frontex Regulation.

⁴ Geographical area of the joint operation as indicated in Article 3a (1) (c) of the Frontex Regulation

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The result of this will only be to hamper the course of the ongoing operations, by depriving them of any strategy and element of surprise during border surveillance, ultimately obstructing their purpose to counter and prevent cross-border criminality as well as prevent unauthorized border crossings.

In this light, the disclosure of such information would undermine the protection of the public interest as regard to public security in the sense of Article 4(1) of the Regulation 1049/2001.

⁵ Reference is made to Operational Plan Focal Points Land 2016 Reg. No 861/2016, 18.01.2016

In case of justified operational need and previously approved by Frontex, the operation area might be extended to other BCPs located in the same region as the Focal Points listed at point 5.3 of the Operational Plan of JO Focal Points 2016 Land and which are considered as alternative routes for irregular migration and for other cross border related crime.

5.5. Initial participants

Host MS	Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania and in case the operational needs justifies so also Finland, Estonia and Greece.
Home MS	Austria, Bulgaria, Italy, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia, Spain.

5.6. Operational briefings / debriefings

All participants taking part in joint operation will receive the Operational briefing and debriefing delivered by representatives of Frontex and/or national authorities of host MS. At the end of each deployment, the host MS will organize a debriefing meeting with the experts deployed.

The detailed information regarding operational areas, initial plan of deployed resources and operational briefing and debriefing is provided in Specific Annexes 4-6.

The standard plan of operational briefing and debriefing is available in General Annexes.

6. COOPERATION WITH THIRD COUNTRIES, OTHER UNION AGENCIES AND BODIES OR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

6.1. Cooperation with third countries

In the framework of the existing Working Arrangements between Frontex and the competent authorities of Albania, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Ukraine and pursuant to Article 14(6) of the Frontex Regulation, Frontex has invited border guard/police officers from the aforementioned countries to be deployed as observers in the Focal Points established at the external land borders with prior agreement of the Host MS.

SGOs will cooperate with deployed observers if they are deployed to the same Focal Point.

The more detailed information regarding the participation and tasks of Third Country Observers in joint operation is defined in Specific Annex 7.

6.2. Cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations

During the joint operation the cooperation with Europol is foreseen.

More detailed information about cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations within land border activity is provided in Specific Annex 8.

7. COORDINATION STRUCTURE

7.1. Partnership

Frontex is the EU coordinator, initiating, promoting and facilitating the EU MSs synchronized efforts to control the external borders.

The local authorities are the direct partners of Frontex and responsible for all border related activities within the joint operation and for all registration related activities within the registration package module.

The home MSs will support the achievement of operational objectives and implementation of activities by deploying their resources to the defined locations in particular periods of time.

7.2. Main operational structures / actors and their tasks

7.2.1. Member States

- International Coordination Centre (ICC) - The ICC of JO Flexible Operational Activities 2016 Land on Border Checks will be established in Frontex Headquarters and composed of Frontex Coordinating Officer, Operational Team, FSC SDO and ICC Coordinators of the host MSs. ICC

8. COMMAND, CONTROL, COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING

8.1. Command and control

SGO perform their tasks under the instructions from the border guards of the host MS, while their command and control is exercised by Frontex.

The general command and control provisions are defined in General Annexes.

Command and control scheme is defined in Specific Annex 9.

Names of the host MS border guards and police responsible for cooperating with the teams, in particular those of the border guards/police who are in command of the teams during the period of deployment, and the place of the teams in the chain of command are included in Specific Annex 11.

8.2. Operational communication

The operational communication between Frontex and all operational actors will be ensured via e-mail, cell and fixed line phones and videoconference as well as radio and satellite phones.

The information about joint operation (operational documents) will be accessible via FOSS.

Access to the website containing Operational Plan and other relevant operational documents, contact details are granted to participants of the joint operation according to FOSS procedures. Participants will be granted access to the webpage on FOSS after their introduction in OPERA. Other participants, who are not introduced in OPERA, will receive access after submission and authorization of the FOSS User Access Request Form. SGO will be granted FOSS access by default to the joint operation page on FOSS, unless otherwise requested by the Operational Manager.

Detailed information about communication and FOSS is provided in General Annexes.

Contact details of participants can be found in Specific Annex 11.

8.3. Communication with Press

Frontex is strongly committed to the principle of transparency, therefore, as a general rule, media should be granted access to operational areas.

Frontex communication policy, rules and guidelines for handling media requests are included in General Annexes.

The contact details of Frontex press office members (Spoke Person and Press Officer) and dedicated press officers of national authority of the host country are indicated in Specific Annex 11.

8.4. Reporting

The examples of templates of all reports are provided in General Annexes. The templates in Word format are stored on FOSS.

8.4.1. Incidents reporting and JORA

All relevant incidents that have occurred within the joint shall be reported via JORA System.

Eurosur Fusion Services

The Eurosur Fusion Services EFS (Geospatial Information Service, Meteo Service and Visual Data Discovery Service) are available for the Member States to support decision-making, planning and execution of missions.

Services should support MSs and their existing systems to enhance their situational awareness and reaction capabilities of own assets and human resources.

Aligned with operational needs, these services are accessible via the Eurosur Network and the JORA Visualization Module. For more information, please send an e-mail to [REDACTED]

Comprehensive information on JORA is provided in General Annexes.

The list of JORA actors, the incidents reporting structure and JORA incident template attributes list are described in Specific Annex 10.

The JORA Guidelines are available in FOSS.

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8.4.2 Reports from participants

Type of report	Description	Responsibility	To be sent to
ICC Daily report	In case of operational need daily operational overview, covering the last 24 hours (06:00 - 05:59) will be prepared.	ICC	Shall be sent via functional email: [REDACTED]
Intelligence reports	Intelligence related to irregular migration gathered from migrants and the national authorities	SGO	Shall be sent via functional email: [REDACTED] and emails of respective LCCs
SGOs Monthly Report	Monthly SGO Report includes information related to the SGOs performance and also a brief operational information related to FP	SGO	Shall be sent via functional email [REDACTED] and cc to email of respective FP Local Coordinator within 7 working days (Month+7)
Report from National Briefer	Information on National briefing provided to participants of the JO	National Briefer	Shall be sent to the Training Unit via email [REDACTED] within 5 days
Incident reports from Reporting Units	Information collected by the reporting units from the operational area, within the scope of the JO provided to FSC	LCC	Shall be sent via the reporting application JORA, according to the reporting timetable in Annex 10

In order to enhance operational cooperation and synergies between different coordinated activities implemented in the area, SGO deployed at FPs may regularly report to the ICC established in the framework of Joint Operation Flexible Operational Activities 2016 Land on Border Surveillance, through the established reporting channels of the Local Coordination Centre.

8.4.2 Daily package

In case of operational need and prior agreement with the Host MS, the Daily Package shall be prepared by the ICC Staff and shall consist of the reports indicated in a chapter above. The ICC is responsible for the

dissemination of the Daily Package on a daily basis before 13.00 CET to Frontex (Operational Team and FSC) via functional emails [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

8.4.3 Serious Incident reporting

Type of report	Description	Responsibility
Serious Incident Report	Serious Incident Report is an alert message that shall be reported immediately (within 2 hours after recognition) to FSC and the host MS' authorities in case an incident, natural or caused by human action, occurs which may affect, or be relevant to a particular Frontex activity, the safety and security of participants in Frontex activities, the Agency's mission and reputation, or any combination thereof, having special regard to any allegation of violation of Fundamental Rights.	All participants of the JO
Shall be sent immediately via functional emails [REDACTED] and host MS LCC.		

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As of 2015 operations the formal SIR has been implemented in JORA and therefore should be reported via JORA according to the SIR procedure in the general annexes of the operational plan.

Serious Incidents Catalogue is available in General Annexes.

8.4.4 Frontex reports

Type of report	Description	Responsibility	To be sent
FCO report	Feedback on performed activities in the area	FCO	Shall be sent to Frontex via functional email [REDACTED]
FOC Report	Overview of the operational activities	FOC	Shall be sent to Frontex via functional emails [REDACTED]
Monthly Analytical Report/Update (MAU)	Analytical assessment of the factors impacting the situation in the operational area, trends, patterns	OA	MAU shall be sent by OA to functional email [REDACTED] and shall be uploaded on FOSS by OT.
FSC Situational Report	Overview of the operational activities related to the 24-hour period of the preceding day	FSC SDO	Will be uploaded on FOSS under the responsibility of SDO to be accessible for MS and distributed to other stakeholders by email only in case they do not have access to FOSS

8.4.5 Document alert and Reference Manual

The officers are requested to compile the Reference Manual Alert Form or /and Stolen Vehicles Template each time a relevant document forgery or /and relevant case on stolen vehicle is detected. This compiled

alert(s) shall be sent to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] via the appropriate reporting channel. In case Daily Package is prepared by the ICC, the Alerts shall be inserted in the daily report package. The Alert will be later integrated in the Reference Manual if the relevance will justify it.

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9. ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGMENTS AND LOGISTICS

9.1. Arrangements of deployed resources

9.1.1. Operational resources management system (OPERA)

The Operational resources management system (OPERA) is an integrated web-based system for the management of the operational resources pooled and deployed in Frontex coordinated activities. Information related to the availability and deployment of the resources is available in the application.

All information required for issuing accreditation cards for participants shall be introduced by participating MS via Opera.

More information about Opera is provided in General Annexes.

9.1.2. Composition of the teams of guest officers and deployment of other relevant staff

The deployed officer from the home MS will form joint teams with the officers of the host MS in line with Article 10(3) of the Frontex Regulation.

9.1.3. Technical equipment deployed by Member States

Technical equipment deployed by the MS in the operational areas to foster the border control activities may include mobile document laboratory and any other type of equipment agreed and confirmed by Frontex and the MS.

9.1.4. Management of the operational assets deployed by Frontex

Pooled Resources and Joint Operations Units deal with the distribution and retrieval of operational assets in the operational areas, according to the procedures in place.

More information about arrangements of deployed resources and operational assets is available in General Annexes.

The initial plan of deployed resources is available in Specific Annex 5.

All participants shall get familiar and apply the Tasks and specific instructions to guest officers and other participants (Rules of engagement) defined in Specific Annex 3.

9.2. Transport and lodging

The use of rental car is to be approved in advance by the Operational Manager and expenses should be included in the relevant financial documents. In this case all practical/logistic issues should be arranged by participants themselves in advance.

Information regarding logistical issues can be found in Specific Annex 12.

9.3. Field visits

The field visit should be approved by the Operational Manager and agreed with the LCC of Home MS.

9.4. Logistics

9.4.1. Heavy equipment, firearms and ammunition

Heavy equipment is highly recommended to be delivered on the day after operational briefing and shipped back on the day before debriefing day.

Delivery addresses and list of contact persons are included in Specific Annex 11.

10. EVALUATION

10.1. Member States and Third Countries

Reports	Benchmarks
Report from Participant	Shall be submitted to Frontex within 7 calendar days after deployment via functional email: [REDACTED] Relevant sections of the report will be distributed to TRU. <i>Template of the report is available on FOSS</i>

The final payment will not be processed until the Report from Participant is not submitted to Frontex.

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10.2. Frontex

Reports	Benchmarks
Frontex Evaluation Report	The results of the joint operation will be evaluated and Frontex Evaluation Report (FER) will be transmitted within 60 calendar days after the termination of the JO to the Management Board together with the observations of the Fundamental Rights Officer referred to in Article 26a of the Frontex Regulation. FER will be uploaded on FOSS.

11. FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

In accordance with the decision of the Frontex Executive Director, Frontex will co-finance the joint operation. Frontex will reimburse eligible costs incurred by participating MS authorities in relation to deployments of human and technical resources provided that the Framework Partnership Agreement is in force.

Detailed financial provisions are described in General Annexes.

SPECIFIC ANNEX

Annex 1	Description and assessment of the situation
Annex 2	Operational objectives and indicators
Annex 3	Description of the tasks and specific instructions to guest officers and other participants (Rules of engagement)
Annex 4	Operational area
Annex 5	Initial plan of deployed resources
Annex 6	Operational briefing and debriefing
Annex 7	Cooperation with third countries
Annex 8	Cooperation with other Union agencies and bodies or international organizations
Annex 9	Command and control scheme
Annex 10	JORA (JORA actors, JORA Incidents Reporting Structure, JORA Incident Template Attributes' List)
Annex 11	Contact details
Annex 12	Logistical information
Annex 13	SGO Monthly Report Template