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2024 G7 Apulia Summit Final Compliance Report

15 June 2024 to 15 May 2025

Prepared by

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“We have meanwhile set up a process and there are also independent institutions monitoring which objectives of our G7 meetings we actually achieve. When it comes to these goals we have a compliance rate of about 80%, according to the University of Toronto. Germany, with its 87%, comes off pretty well. That means that next year too, under the Japanese G7 presidency, we are going to check where we stand in comparison to what we have discussed with each other now. So a lot of what we have resolved to do here together is something that we are going to have to work very hard at over the next few months. But I think that it has become apparent that we, as the G7, want to assume responsibility far beyond the prosperity in our own countries. That’s why today’s outreach meetings, that is the meetings with our guests, were also of great importance.”

Chancellor Angela Merkel, Schloss Elmau, 8 June 2015

G7 summits are a moment for people to judge whether aspirational intent is met by concrete commitments. The G7 Research Group provides a report card on the implementation of G7 and G20 commitments. It is a good moment for the public to interact with leaders and say, you took a leadership position on these issues — a year later, or three years later, what have you accomplished?

Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme,
in G7 Canada: The 2018 Charlevoix Summit

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19. Migration and Refugees: Preventing Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking

“In line with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols, we will also strengthen our actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.”

G7 Apulia Leaders’ Communiqué

Assessment

	No Compliance	Partial Compliance	Full Compliance
Canada		0	
France		0	
Germany		0	
Italy		0	
Japan		0	
United Kingdom			+1
United States			+1
European Union			+1
Average	+0.38 (69%)		

Background

Both human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants have been consistently addressed in the G7 agenda. However, while both terms are related to migratory flows, they refer to two distinct phenomena. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees defines “smuggling of migrants” as the facilitation of a person’s illegal entry into a state⁴⁴¹⁴ and distinguishes that “trafficking in persons” is the intention to exploit the individual concerned.⁴⁴¹⁵ At the 2024 Apulia Summit, the G7 acknowledged the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and committed to strengthening actions to tackle the organized criminal networks that derive profit from migrant smuggling and human trafficking.⁴⁴¹⁶ To this end, the G7 has closely worked with the United Nations since the 2000 Okinawa Summit, where leaders promoted the UNTOC to counter migrant smuggling. At the 2013 Lough Erne Summit, the G7 partnered with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to combat transnational organized crime, including human trafficking. Thus, cooperation has been central to discussions surrounding this issue. Highlights on G7 action relating to this commitment follow.

At the 1998 Birmingham Summit, G8 leaders committed to act against the trafficking and smuggling of migrants, particularly of women and children.⁴⁴¹⁷ Leaders also committed to joining efforts to deter trafficking, protect victims, and take legal action against criminal facilitating enterprises.

At the 2000 Okinawa Summit, G8 leaders supported the implementation of the United Nations Transnational Organized Crime Convention and other associated protocols on weapons trafficking and people smuggling.⁴⁴¹⁸ This was an effort to develop effective legislation against transnational organized crime. Leaders also stated the importance of acting against individuals who profit from facilitating irregular migration and human trafficking.

⁴⁴¹⁴ People Smuggling, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Geneva) n.d. Access Date: 16 September 2024.

<https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/protect-human-rights/asylum-and-migration/people-smuggling>

⁴⁴¹⁵ What is Human Trafficking, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (Geneva) n.d. Access Date: 16 September 2024.

<https://help.unhcr.org/iran/en/more-information/what-is-human-trafficking/>

⁴⁴¹⁶ Apulia G7 Leaders’ Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Apulia) 14 June 2024. Access Date: 7 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2024apulia/240614-apulia-communique.html>

⁴⁴¹⁷ Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 17 May 1998. Access Date: 4 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/1998birmingham/finalcom.htm>

⁴⁴¹⁸ G8 Communiqué Okinawa 2000, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 23 July 2000. Access Date: 4 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2000okinawa/finalcom.htm>

At the 2001 Genoa Summit, G8 leaders committed to fight against transnational organized crime, supporting the efforts towards tackling human trafficking.⁴⁴¹⁹

At the 2008 Hokkaido Summit, G8 leaders committed to enhancing cooperation to counter human trafficking and smuggling of migrants.⁴⁴²⁰

At the 2009 L'Aquila Summit, G8 leaders affirmed their commitment to endorse measures of technical support in countries that face destabilizing threats such as human trafficking.⁴⁴²¹

At the 2011 Deauville Summit, G8 leaders recognized the importance of cooperating to address international challenges such as human trafficking and organized crime.⁴⁴²²

At the 2012 Camp David Summit, G8 leaders committed to putting an end to the trafficking of women and girls.⁴⁴²³

At the 2013 Lough Erne Summit, G8 leaders committed to assisting regional and international organizations working with countries to strengthen the security of their borders and counter transnational organized crime and human trafficking.⁴⁴²⁴ Leaders also acknowledged the efforts of the UNODC on this issue.

At the 2015 Elmau Summit, G7 leaders committed to fighting against the trafficking of migrants, and to identifying and hindering human trafficking.⁴⁴²⁵

At the 2016 Ise-Shima Summit, G7 leaders reaffirmed their intention to cooperate with countries of origin, transit, and destination to combat the smuggling of migrants, modern slavery, and ensure the safety of victims of human trafficking.⁴⁴²⁶ Leaders also expressed their concern about the increase in human trafficking in Libya. Leaders remained supportive of regional organizations in Africa and their actions to tackle human trafficking.

At the 2017 Taormina Summit, G7 leaders recognized the importance of nations protecting migrants and implementing mechanisms such as increasing law enforcement collaboration and border controls, which are crucial to counter human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants.⁴⁴²⁷

At the 2018 Charlevoix Summit, G7 leaders stressed the importance of taking action to eliminate human trafficking and urged the international community to fight against this abuse of human rights.⁴⁴²⁸

⁴⁴¹⁹ Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 22 July 2001. Access Date: 5 September 2024.

<https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2001genoa/finalcommuniqué.html>

⁴⁴²⁰ G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit Leaders' Declaration, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 8 July 2008. Access Date: 5 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2008hokkaido/2008-declaration.html>

⁴⁴²¹ G8 Declaration on Counter Terrorism, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 9 July 2009. Access Date: 5 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2009laquila/2009-counterterrorism.html>

⁴⁴²² G8/Africa Joint Declaration: Shared Values, Shared Responsibilities, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 27 May 2011. Access Date: 5 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-africa-en.html>

⁴⁴²³ Camp David Declaration, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 19 May 2012. Access Date: 5 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2012campdavid/g8-declaration.html>

⁴⁴²⁴ G8 Lough Erne Leaders Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 18 June 2013. Access Date: 5 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2013lougherne/lough-erne-communiqué.html>

⁴⁴²⁵ Leaders' Declaration: G7 Summit, G7 Information Summit (Toronto) 8 June 2015. Access Date: 5 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2015elmau/2015-G7-declaration-en.html>

⁴⁴²⁶ G7 Ise-Shima Leaders' Declaration, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 27 May 2016. Access Date: 5 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2016shima/ise-shima-declaration-en.html>

⁴⁴²⁷ G7 Taormina Leaders' Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 27 May 2017. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2017taormina/communiqué.html>

⁴⁴²⁸ The Charlevoix G7 Summit Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 9 June 2018. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2018charlevoix/communiqué.html>

At the 2022 Elmau Summit, G7 leaders recognized the need to fight against human trafficking and smuggling of migrants and committed to increasing their efforts to combat this issue.⁴⁴²⁹

At the 2023 Hiroshima Summit, G7 leaders committed to strengthening their actions to hinder the operating schemes of organized criminal networks by upsetting the supply chains of human traffickers and migrant smugglers.⁴⁴³⁰ Leaders also reaffirmed their commitment to fight against transnational organized crime and human trafficking.

At the 2022 Apulia Summit, leaders committed that “in line with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its Protocols, we will also strengthen our actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.”⁴⁴³¹

Commitment Features

This commitment can be understood as having four components. G7 members have committed to take action to 1) prevent, 2) counter and 3) dismantle organized criminal networks engaged in the smuggling of migrants and trafficking of persons. As well, members have committed to 4) disrupting the business models of these criminal organizations.

Definitions and Concepts

“Actions” is understood to mean an “accomplishment of a thing usually over a period of time, in stages, or with the possibility of repetition.”⁴⁴³²

“Business model of transnational criminal networks” is understood to mean a structured method, which incorporates strategies used by these organizations to facilitate, and enhance their illicit activities across borders. Those models tend to mirror legitimate business operations, focusing on supply and demand, market expansion, and profit maximization, but within the realm of illegal goods and services.⁴⁴³³

“Counter” is understood to mean “to meet attacks or arguments with defensive or retaliatory steps.”⁴⁴³⁴

“Disrupt” is understood to mean “to interrupt the normal course or unity of.”⁴⁴³⁵

“Dismantle” is understood to mean to “destroy the integrity or functioning of.”⁴⁴³⁶ In the context of this commitment, this relates to “destroying the integrity and functioning of” smuggling and trafficking infrastructure.

⁴⁴²⁹ G7 Leaders' Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 28 June 2022. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2022elmau/220628-communication.html>

⁴⁴³⁰ G7 Hiroshima Leaders' Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Toronto) 20 May 2023. Access Date: 6 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2023hiroshima/230520-communication.html>

⁴⁴³¹ Apulia G7 Leaders' Communiqué, G7 Information Centre (Apulia) 14 June 2024. Access Date: 7 September 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/summit/2024apulia/240614-apulia-communication.html>

⁴⁴³² Action, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/action>

⁴⁴³³ Adapted from United Nations on Drugs and Crime, E4J University Module Series: Organized Crime, n.d. Access Date: 15 October 2024. <https://www.unodc.org/e4j/en/organized-crime/module-7/key-issues/enterprise-or-business-model.html>

⁴⁴³⁴ Counter, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/counter>

⁴⁴³⁵ Disrupt, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/disrupt>

⁴⁴³⁶ Dismantle, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/dismantle>

“Organised Crime” is understood to mean “a group of professional criminals who work together as part of a powerful and secret organization.”⁴⁴³⁷

“Prevent” is understood to mean “to deprive of power or hope of acting or succeeding.”⁴⁴³⁸

“Smuggling” is understood to mean “to move individuals from one country to another secretly and illegally.”⁴⁴³⁹

“Strengthen” is understood to mean “to make stronger.”⁴⁴⁴⁰

“Trafficking in persons” is understood to mean “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.”⁴⁴⁴¹

“UNTOC and its protocols” are understood to refer to the convention adopted by General Assembly of United Nations resolution 55/25 of 15 November 2000, it represents one of the main international instruments in the fight against transnational organized crime. The convention has been enhanced by multiple Protocols focusing on dedicated challenges.⁴⁴⁴²

General Interpretive Guidelines

Full compliance, or a score of +1, will be assigned to G7 members that take strong action in all four commitment dimensions specified in the UNTOC and its protocols, with actions towards organized criminal networks that:

1. Prevent: Such measures may involve regulatory policies, awareness programs, and community initiatives to reduce the appeal or feasibility of joining or forming such networks.
2. Counter: Such measures can include law enforcement actions, legal prosecutions, intelligence gathering, and resource allocation to mitigate the activities of existing criminal organizations.
3. Dismantle Networks: Such action may involve specific operations to arrest leaders, seize assets, and disrupt internal communication channels, effectively rendering the network non-functional.
4. Disrupt Business Models: Such actions can involve asset seizures, preventing money laundering, and making it more difficult for these networks to sustain profitable illegal enterprises.

Examples of strong actions to strengthen data exchange include entering intelligence sharing agreements, signing mutual legal assistance agreements, and strengthening cooperation with international organizations, such as Interpol, to this end. Examples of strong actions to strengthen financial investigation include improving anti-money laundering laws to the end of dismantling organized crime, strengthening domestic anti-corruption mechanisms through funding or training, pursuing parallel financial investigations, and enhancing cooperation

⁴⁴³⁷ Organised Crime, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/organized%20crime>

⁴⁴³⁸ Prevent, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/prevent>

⁴⁴³⁹ Adapted from Smuggle, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/smuggle>

⁴⁴⁴⁰ Strengthen, Merriam-Webster (Springfield) n.d. Access Date: 12 September 2024. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/strengthen>

⁴⁴⁴¹ What is Trafficking in Persons?, International Organization for Migration (Grand-Saconnex) n.d. Access Date: 17 September 2024. <https://indonesia.iom.int/what-trafficking-persons>

⁴⁴⁴² Adapted from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. n.d. Access Date: 10 October 2024. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/organized-crime/intro/UNTOC.html>

on asset confiscation. Examples of strong actions to strengthen awareness raising include undertaking robust public awareness campaigns. In order to assess compliance with this commitment separately from Commitment 18 (Migration and Refugees: Border Management), law enforcement actions and arrests made at the border are excluded from this commitment.

Partial compliance, or a score of 0, will be assigned to G7 members that take strong action in between one and three commitment dimensions, or weak action in at least two dimensions. Examples of weak action include discussions on tackling smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons, statements of support, and general restatements of the commitment.

Non-compliance, or a score of -1, will be assigned to G7 members that fail to take any action, take only weak action in just one dimension, or take action that is contradictory to the commitment.

Scoring Guidelines

-1	The G7 member has not taken any action to prevent, counter, dismantle networks or disrupt business models, the G7 member has taken only weak action in one dimension or the G7 member has taken action contradictory to the commitment.
0	The G7 member has taken strong action in between one and three of the four commitment dimensions: to prevent, to counter, to dismantle networks, or to disrupt business models, as they relate to migrant smuggling and trafficking, or the G7 member has taken weak action in at least three of these dimensions.
+1	The G7 member has strong action in all four commitment dimensions: to prevent, to counter, to dismantle networks, and to disrupt business models, as they relate to migrant smuggling and trafficking.

Compliance Director: Michal Gromek
Lead Analyst: Anali Arambula Galindo

Canada: 0

Canada has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 12 July 2024, Canadian Ministers met with US officials at the 2024 US-Canada Cross Border Crime Forum to discuss their commitment to bolster partnerships in law enforcement, national security and trafficking.⁴⁴⁴³ The US and Canada reiterated their commitment to optimizing information sharing regarding law enforcement and intelligence to combat transnational organized crime.

On 18 September 2024, the Government amended its Criminal Code on the Offences Against the Person and Reputation focusing on Kidnapping, Trafficking in Persons, Hostage Taking and Abduction section C-15 to counter trafficking with a focus to counter sexual exploitation of children involving the internet.⁴⁴⁴⁴

On 4 October 2024, G7 Interior and Security Ministers announced the G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants.⁴⁴⁴⁵ The priorities of the plan are to improve collaboration and communication

⁴⁴⁴³ The 2024 U.S.–Canada Cross Border Crime Forum (CBCF), Public Safety Canada (Ottawa) 12 July 2024. Access Date: 20 September 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2024/07/the-2024-uscanada-cross-border-crime-forum-cbcf.html>

⁴⁴⁴⁴ Offences Against the Person and Reputation (continued): Kidnapping, Trafficking in Persons, Hostage Taking and Abduction (continued), Justice Laws Website (n/a) 18 September 2024. Access Date: 15 November 2024. <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-46/page-43.html>

⁴⁴⁴⁵ Annex A: G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants, G7 Information Centre (Mirabella Eclano) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/justice/2024-interior-action-plan.html>

between partner countries, strengthen border management, and discourage migrants by informing them of the risks.

On 4 October 2024, the Government of Canada and the European Union announced their signing of the Agreement on the Transfer and Processing of Passenger Name Record (PNR) Data.⁴⁴⁴⁶ This agreement provides a legal basis for PNR data exchange for flights incoming to Canada from countries in the EU to increase the countering and preventing measures against human trafficking.

On 17 October 2024, the RCMP announced a successful operation alongside the US Federal Bureau of Investigation that targeted a Mexican drug cartel network which trafficked drugs to North America.⁴⁴⁴⁷ The operation resulted in many arrests in the US and Canada, along with drug seizures, indicating their strong commitment to stopping trafficking across borders.

On 26 November 2024, G7 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment made at the Apulia Summit to address irregular migration and its causes, including poverty, instability, and climate change.⁴⁴⁴⁸

On 17 December 2024, Minister of Finance and Intergovernmental Affairs Dominic LeBlanc, Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Marc Miller and Minister of Mental Health and Addictions and Associate Minister of Health Ya'ara Saks published Canada's Border Plan, which is supported by a CAD1.3 billion investment.⁴⁴⁴⁹ The plan proposes strengthening intelligence sharing between domestic authorities and international partners such as the United States. The plan aims to dismantle transnational organised crime by blocking their access to the profits resulting from people smuggling.

On 3 January 2025, Minister of Public Safety David McGuinty announced that the federal government will begin exercises with the Canadian provinces and territories, starting with Ontario, to further enhance their efforts to address border affairs.⁴⁴⁵⁰ The exercise is an addition to Canada's CAD 1.3 billion Border Plan, aimed at improving the Canada Border Services Agency and the RCMP's prevention abilities against both drug and migrant trafficking.

On 4 February 2025, Minister McGuinty, announced further measures to expand the CAD 1.3 billion Border Plan released in December.⁴⁴⁵¹ The new measures include the launch of the Canada-US Joint Strike Force and the 24/7 border surveillance to increase efforts to dismantle organized crime.

⁴⁴⁴⁶ Canada and the European Union sign agreement to enhance border security, Canada Border Services Agency (Ottawa) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 1 November 2024. <https://www.canada.ca/en/border-services-agency/news/2024/10/canada-and-the-european-union-sign-agreement-to-enhance-border-security.html>

⁴⁴⁴⁷ Significant transnational organized crime group disrupted by RCMP, FBI and police across Canada and the Americas, Royal Canadian Mounted Police (Ottawa) 17 October 2024. Access Date: 29 December 2024. <https://rcmp.ca/en/news/2024/10/significant-transnational-organized-crime-group-disrupted-rcmp-fbi-and-police-across-canada-and>

⁴⁴⁴⁸ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

⁴⁴⁴⁹ Government of Canada announces its plan to strengthen border security and our immigration system, Public Safety Canada (Ottawa) 17 December 2024. Access Date: 21 February 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2024/12/government-of-canada-announces-its-plan-to-strengthen-border-security-and-our-immigration-system.html>

⁴⁴⁵⁰ Government of Canada announces border security exercises with provinces and territories, starting with Ontario, Public Safety Canada (Ottawa) 3 January 2025. Access Date: 21 February 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2025/01/government-of-canada-announces-border-security-exercises-with-provinces-and-territories-starting-with-ontario.html>

⁴⁴⁵¹ Government of Canada expands plan to strengthen border security, Public Safety Canada (Ottawa) 4 February 2025. Access Date: 21 February 2025. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-safety-canada/news/2025/02/government-of-canada-expands-plan-to-strengthen-border-security.html>

On 14 March 2025, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly issued a joint statement alongside the G7 foreign ministers, reaffirming the G7's commitment to maritime security and combating illegal maritime crimes.⁴⁴⁵² These commitments include combating human trafficking.

Canada has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. Canada has taken strong action to both prevent and counter migrant smuggling but has not adequately addressed the dismantling of criminal networks or the disruption of these networks' business models.

Thus, Canada receives a score of 0.

Analyst: TianTian Dong

France: 0

France has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 5 July 2024, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) announced the seizure of a human trafficking network operating in France and Romania.⁴⁴⁵³ The French authorities, aided by Eurojust and Europol, collaborated with the Romanian authorities to successfully track down and arrest the suspected members of the trafficking group that had been smuggling Romanian women into France for sexual exploitation.

On 30 September 2024, Political Coordinator for France at the United Nations Isis Jaraud Darnault reaffirmed France's commitment to fight against human trafficking in the Mediterranean, closely collaborating with the African Union (AU) and the United Nations through the EU/AU/UN task force.⁴⁴⁵⁴ France aims to assist Libya to tackle trafficking organisms by enhancing coordination between EU member states and endorsing the efforts of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration.

On 1 October 2024, Prime Minister Michel Barnier outlined the French government's stance on immigration moving forward.⁴⁴⁵⁵ He affirmed that France will impose stricter measures to control immigration, such as lengthening the maximum holding time of irregular immigrants to facilitate their exit from the country, improving border security through collaboration with countries of origin and transit, imposing harsher sentences for individuals involved in smuggling and trafficking, and re-establishing border checks. This initiative shows France's commitment to countering migrant smuggling and trafficking.

⁴⁴⁵² G7 Foreign Ministers' Declaration on Maritime Security and Prosperity, G7 Information Centre (Charlevoix) 14 March 2025. Access date: 21 March 2025. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/250314-declaration.html>

⁴⁴⁵³ Coordinated actions from Romanian and French authorities to stop a human trafficking network, Eurojust (The Hague) 5 July 2024. Access Date: 21 September 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/actions-taken-stop-romanian-human-trafficking-network>

⁴⁴⁵⁴ Libya: France continues to take action to prevent tragedies in the Mediterranean, Mission Permanente de la France Auprès des Nations Unies à New York (New York) 1 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 14 November 2024. <https://onu.delegfrance.org/libya-france-continues-to-take-action-to-prevent-tragedies-in-the-mediterranean>

⁴⁴⁵⁵ Déclaration de politique générale de M. Michel Barnier, Premier ministre, sur la feuille de route gouvernementale en matière de niveau de vie, de logement, de sécurité et d'immigration, ainsi que sur la réduction des dettes budgétaire et écologique, à l'Assemblée nationale le 1er octobre 2024, Direction de l'information légale et administrative (Paris) 3 October 2024. Translation provided by Analyst. Access Date: 2 November 2024. <https://www.vie-publique.fr/discours/295574-michel-barnier-01102024-declare-politique-generale-assemblee-nationale>

On 4 October 2024, the Minister of the Interior Bruno Retailleau and Italian Minister of the Interior Matteo Piantedosi signed a document indicating their determination to share information about migrant trafficking.⁴⁴⁵⁶ The governments intend to investigate and take down criminal migrant trafficking networks.

On 4 October 2024, G7 Interior and Security Ministers announced the G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants.⁴⁴⁵⁷ The priorities of the plan are to improve collaboration and communication between partner countries, strengthen border management, and discourage migrants by informing them of the risks.

On 4 October 2024, Minister Retailleau signed a declaration of intent aiming to establish an 'Italian-French Operational Research Unit' to combat illegal immigration.⁴⁴⁵⁸ The purpose of the initiative is to counter illegal migration but also to identify possible criminal networks dedicated to aiding and abetting illegal immigration by land across the Ventimiglia border and neighbouring areas.

On 11 October 2024, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe announced the completion of an anti-human trafficking exercise based in Italy.⁴⁴⁵⁹ The governments of Italy, the United States, France and Germany contributed funds and equipment for the exercise.

On 18 October 2024, the French authorities tried alleged trafficking mastermind Mirkhan Rasoul, who is accused of organizing and controlling one of the biggest smuggling gangs that facilitated migrant crossings in the English Channel from 2020-2022.⁴⁴⁶⁰ His trial is part of an overarching European smuggling trial concerning the gang's members, who were arrested during a previous joint operation against smugglers led by France, the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany.

On 30 October 2024, President Emmanuel Macron announced that France and Morocco signed a bilateral agreement to fight against clandestine immigration and trafficking.⁴⁴⁶¹ The countries will also collaborate on fighting transnational organized crime and providing a more effective framework for returning irregular migrants from France to Morocco.

On 5 November 2024, a French court convicted members of an English Channel smuggling group.⁴⁴⁶² The individuals were sentenced to multiple years of jail time, with up to 15 years for the group mastermind Mirkhan Rasoul.

⁴⁴⁵⁶ France, Italy launch project to exchange migrant trafficking information, Reuters (Toronto) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/france-italy-launch-project-exchange-migrant-trafficking-information-2024-10-04/>

⁴⁴⁵⁷ Annex A: G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants, G7 Information Centre (Mirabella Eclano) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/justice/2024-interior-action-plan.html>

⁴⁴⁵⁸ G7 of Interior Ministers in Mirabella Eclano, bilateral between Piantedosi and his French counterpart Retailleau, Ministero dell'Interno (Rome) 4 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 6 March 2025. <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/stampa-e-comunicazione/comunicati-stampa/g7-dei-ministri-dellinterno-mirabella-eclano-bilaterale-piantedosi-e-suo-omologo-francese-retailleau>

⁴⁴⁵⁹ Anti-trafficking practitioners meet in Italy for first Mediterranean regional simulation-based training exercise, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (Vienna) 11 October 2024. Access Date: 1 June 2025. <https://www.osce.org/cthb/578104>

⁴⁴⁶⁰ 'Merchants of death' trial steps up fight against Channel smugglers, British Broadcasting Corporation (London) 18 October 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cden09n621wo>

⁴⁴⁶¹ Paris et Rabat ont noué "un partenariat renforcé" contre "l'immigration clandestine", France 24 (Paris) 30 October 2024. Translation provided by Analyst. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.france24.com/fr/afrique/20241030-paris-et-rabat-ont-nou%C3%A9-un-partenariat-renforc%C3%A9-contre-l-immigration-clandestine>

⁴⁴⁶² 18 convicted in France for small boat people smuggling following joint operation involving NCA, National Crime Agency (London) 5 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/18-convicted-in-france-for-small-boat-people-smuggling-following-joint-operation-involving-nca>

On 26 November 2024, G7 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment made at the Apulia Summit to address irregular migration and its causes, including poverty, instability, and climate change.⁴⁴⁶³

On 28 November 2024, the French National Police, supported by EU members, dismantled a transnational criminal group engaged in migrant smuggling.⁴⁴⁶⁴ The group, active in France since 2022, allegedly profited hundreds of millions of euros from smuggling thousands of migrants.

On 29 November 2024, On 29 November 2024, Director of Immigration of the Ministry of the Interior Simon Fetet, Diplomatic Advisor Mathilde Grammont, Deputy Ambassador in charge of Migration at the Ministry of Europe and Foreign Affairs Frédéric Rimoux and Chief of the removal centre at the Directorate of Immigration Delphine Montuelle with Moroccan Migration, Border and Foreign Affairs Ministers to discuss migration between the two states.⁴⁴⁶⁵ Building upon their previous meeting, the representatives conversed about facilitating legal immigration to France, fighting against irregular immigration, and cooperating on the return of irregular Moroccan migrants.

On 4 December 2024, French security services conducted a joint operation with Europol and German law enforcement to crack down on an alleged Iraqi-Kurdish migrant smuggling network.⁴⁴⁶⁶ This action dismantled a transnational migrant smuggling operation and strengthened international police cooperation.

On 14 March 2025, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Noël Barrot issued a joint statement alongside the G7 foreign ministers, reaffirming the G7's commitment to maritime security and combating illegal maritime crimes.⁴⁴⁶⁷ These commitments include combating human trafficking.

On 1 April 2025, an estimated 300 officers from the French Gendarmerie Nationale cooperated with Europol to dismantle a migrant-smuggling organised criminal network along the European Union border in the Balkans.⁴⁴⁶⁸ The operations led to 24 house searches, arrests and 3 vehicle seizures.

France has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. France has taken strong action to both prevent and counter migrant smuggling. It has also dismantled criminal networks involved in human trafficking and migrant smuggling but has not taken sufficient action to disrupt these organizations' business models.

Thus, France receives a score of 0.

Analyst: TianTian Dong

⁴⁴⁶³ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

⁴⁴⁶⁴ France arrests 26 for smuggling migrants from Indian sub-continent, Europol (The Hague) 28 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/france-arrests-26-for-smuggling-migrants-indian-sub-continent>

⁴⁴⁶⁵ Maroc-France : une réunion inédite pour améliorer les procédures migratoires, Ministère de l'Intérieur (Paris) 30 November 2024. Translation provided by Analyst. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.interieur.gouv.fr/actualites/communiqués-de-presse/maroc-france-reunion-inedite-pour-ameliorer-procedures-migratoires>

⁴⁴⁶⁶ German police conduct raids on alleged people smugglers, Deutsche Welle (Bonn) 4 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.dw.com/en/german-police-conduct-raids-on-alleged-people-smugglers/a-70957059>

⁴⁴⁶⁷ G7 Foreign Ministers' Declaration on Maritime Security and Prosperity, G7 Information Centre (Charlevoix) 14 March 2025. Access date: 21 March 2025. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/250314-declaration.html>

⁴⁴⁶⁸ Migrant-smuggling driver cell intercepted in France, Europol (The Hague) 10 April 2025. Access Date: 8 April 2025. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/migrant-smuggling-driver-cell-intercepted-in-france>

Germany: 0

Germany has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 27 June 2024, the Federal Minister of the Interior and Community Nancy Faeser welcomed the Minister of Interior of Türkiye Ali Yerlikaya for a discussion on German and Turkish cooperation.⁴⁴⁶⁹ The Ministers focused on enhancing their collaboration on issues regarding organized crime, migrant smuggling and terrorism.

On 28 June 2024, Minister for Foreign Affairs Annalena Baerbock met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Moroccan Expatriates of the Kingdom of Morocco, Nasser Bourita, to discuss the partnerships between Germany and Morocco.⁴⁴⁷⁰ The Ministers voiced their support for the bilateral Mixed Migration Working Group and concurred on efforts to address irregular migration through facilitating legal migration and returns with support from the EU Talent Partnerships, the Rabat Process, and the Global Compact for Migration.

On 2 July 2024, the Government of Germany and the Government of Poland came together to discuss partnerships and cooperation between Germany and Poland in areas regarding organized crime and illegal immigration.⁴⁴⁷¹ Minister Faeser spoke with Poland's Interior Minister Tomasz Siemoniak and Sport Minister Sławomir Nitras on ways to bolster border police coordination, tackle migrant smuggling and improve collaboration in cross-border disaster management efforts.

On 11 July 2024, the German government signed the German-Polish Action Plan underscoring the robust relationship between Poland and Germany.⁴⁴⁷² The recently established joint task force against smuggling and the collaborative patrols on Polish territory will help Germany and Poland more effectively combat the illegal smuggling of migrants and irregular migration, in line with their international obligations.

On 9 September 2024, the Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community announced the temporary expansion of border controls to all of Germany's land borders to counter irregular migration and strengthen homeland security.⁴⁴⁷³ The expansion of border control measures includes joint cross-border cooperation with neighboring authorities to combat cross-border crimes, migrant smuggling and terrorism.

On 12 September 2024, the Federal Criminal Police Office (BKA) published a study on Vietnamese migrant smuggling and exploitation in Germany.⁴⁴⁷⁴ The BKA's report analyzes migrant trafficking networks, forms of exploitation and the practices of human traffickers facilitating these migrant smuggling networks. Law

⁴⁴⁶⁹ Promoting German–Turkish cooperation, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 27 June 2024. Access Date: 24 September 2024. <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/EN/2024/06/tuerk-innenminister.html>

⁴⁴⁷⁰ Joint statement on the Moroccan-German Strategic Dialogue, Federal Foreign Office (Berlin) 28 June 2024. Access Date: 23 September 2024. <https://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/en/newsroom/news/-/2665270>

⁴⁴⁷¹ German-Polish cooperation, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 2 July 2024. Access Date: 25 September 2024. <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/EN/2024/07/dt-pol-regierungskonsultationen.html>

⁴⁴⁷² Deutsch-Polnischer Aktionsplan, Bundesregierung (Berlin) July 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 3 October 2024. <https://www.bundesregierung.de/resource/blob/992814/2295276/b5e9e128f9d0909349fd9a57f04cb/e69/2024-07-02-deu-pol-aktionsplan-de-data.pdf>

⁴⁴⁷³ Limiting irregular migration and protecting internal security: Border checks at all German land borders to start 16 September 2024, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 9 September 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/EN/2024/09/binnengrenzkontrollen_en.html

⁴⁴⁷⁴ BKA-Forschungsbericht zeigt Strukturen des Menschenhandels und der Ausbeutung vietnamesischer Staatsangehöriger in Deutschland, Bundeskriminalamt (Berlin) 12 September 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 3 November 2024.

https://www.bka.de/DE/Presse/Listenseite_Pressemitteilungen/2024/Presse2024/240912_IJ_SO_Menschenhandel.html

enforcement authorities and European partners will be presented with the results of the report to assist them in developing plans to counter migrant trafficking and exploitation.

On 17 September 2024, Minister Faeser met with her counterparts from the governments of Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, and the UK to discuss increased cooperation in combating irregular migration and organised crime.⁴⁴⁷⁵ Increased cooperation could include joint police patrols, data exchange, and the incorporation of financial and social authorities to stop the flow of funds to criminal organizations.

On 24 September 2024, German police arrested at least four individuals associated with migrant smuggling and smuggling people from the Middle East and the Caucasus into Germany.⁴⁴⁷⁶ Around 400 law enforcement officers took part in the operation involving the federal police, prosecutors and customs authorities. This demonstrates Germany's commitment to combatting irregular migration and dismantling organized crime.

On 4 October 2024, Minister Faeser travelled to Mirabella Eclano for the meeting of G7 interior ministers to discuss migration policy and ongoing efforts to combat human smuggling.⁴⁴⁷⁷ The ministers stressed the importance of tackling these issues and engaging with third countries to fight against trafficking and irregular migration.

On 11 October 2024, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe announced the completion of an anti-human trafficking exercise based in Italy.⁴⁴⁷⁸ The governments of Italy, the United States, France and Germany contributed funds and equipment for the exercise.

On 13 October 2024, the Federal Government of Germany announced its first comprehensive national action plan to fight human trafficking, incorporating prevention, prosecution, and victim support measures that are expected to be adopted in spring 2025.⁴⁴⁷⁹ This plan aims to improve “structural conditions” to effectively combat human and cross-border trafficking in the country with greater success.

On 30 October 2024, Minister Faeser and Polish Minister of the Interior and Administration Tomasz Siemoniak traveled to the Polish-Belarusian border and discussed ongoing issues with European migration.⁴⁴⁸⁰ In her discussion with Minister Siemoniak, Minister Faeser reaffirmed German-Polish law enforcement collaboration in their common goals of countering migrant smuggling, criminals and Islamic extremists as well as curtailing irregular migration.

On 12 November 2024, Germany participated in the two-day 7th Ministerial Conference of the Budapest Process, working with EU members and partner countries to promote the Budapest Process Ministerial Declaration and the accompanying Call for Action 2025-2030, which focuses on improving areas of migration

⁴⁴⁷⁵ Federal Minister of the Interior Nancy Faeser continues talks on the Western Balkans, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 17 September 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024.

<https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/EN/2024/09/berliner-prozess.html>

⁴⁴⁷⁶ German police arrest four over alleged people smuggling, Euronews (Lyon) 24 September 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2024/09/24/german-police-arrest-four-suspects-for-alleged-human-smuggling>

⁴⁴⁷⁷ “We are potentially direct targets for terrorist organisations”, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/EN/2024/10/g7.html>

⁴⁴⁷⁸ Anti-trafficking practitioners meet in Italy for first Mediterranean regional simulation-based training exercise, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (Vienna) 11 October 2024. Access Date: 1 June 2025. <https://www.osce.org/cthb/578104>

⁴⁴⁷⁹ Federal Government develops national action plan to fight human trafficking, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 17 October 2024. Access Date: 25 November 2024.

https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/EN/2024/10/aktionsplan_menschenhandel.html

⁴⁴⁸⁰ Federal Minister of the Interior Nancy Faeser visits Poland's border with Belarus, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 30 October 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/EN/2024/10/polen.html>

and asylum.⁴⁴⁸¹ This action will improve Germany's regional dialogues and collaboration with international partners to address migration challenges and foster solutions.

On 26 November 2024, G7 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment made at the Apulia Summit to address irregular migration and its causes, including poverty, instability, and climate change.⁴⁴⁸²

On 4 December 2024, German law enforcement authorities conducted a joint operation with Europol and French security services to crack down on an alleged Iraqi-Kurdish migrant smuggling network.⁴⁴⁸³ This action dismantled a transnational migrant smuggling operation and strengthened international police cooperation.

On 10 December 2024, Minister Faeser and UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper co-hosted the fourth meeting of the Calais Group on combating migrant smuggling.⁴⁴⁸⁴ At the meeting, members of the Calais Group identified five key priorities to address migrant smuggling, including increasing international cooperation and investigations, strengthening financial investigations, improving insights into migration movements, initiating public awareness campaigns and taking joint action against the social media presence of smuggling networks.

On 10 December 2024, Minister Faeser and UK Home Secretary Yvette Cooper signed the Joint Action Plan on Irregular Migration.⁴⁴⁸⁵ The plan aims to strengthen bilateral cooperation by establishing a permanent framework for German-UK cooperation against irregular migration and migrant smuggling, enhancing law enforcement coordination between the two countries, emphasizing multilateral partnerships with European allies, pursuing financial investigations on migrant smuggling networks and setting up international channels to the new British Border Security Command.

On 11 December 2024, Germany adopted its first National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and Protect Trafficked Persons.⁴⁴⁸⁶ The plan addresses all forms of human trafficking, including sexual exploitation, labor exploitation and child trafficking. Additionally, it incorporates forms of exploitation added in the revised EU Anti-Trafficking Directive, namely the exploitation of surrogacy and adoption as well as forced marriage.

On 14 March 2025, Minister for Foreign Affairs Annalena Baerbock issued a joint statement alongside the G7 foreign ministers, reaffirming the G7's commitment to maritime security and combating illegal maritime crimes.⁴⁴⁸⁷ These commitments include combating human trafficking.

⁴⁴⁸¹ 7th Budapest process Ministerial conference: Adoption of the new Ministerial Declaration and Call for Action charts the course for five years of cooperation, ICMPD Budapest process (Budapest) 20 November 2024. Access Date: 24 November 2024. <https://www.budapestprocess.org/7th-budapest-process-ministerial-conference-adoption-of-the-new-ministerial-declaration-and-call-for-action-charts-the-course-for-five-years-of-cooperation/>

⁴⁴⁸² G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

⁴⁴⁸³ German police conduct raids on alleged people smugglers, Deutsche Welle (Bonn) 4 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.dw.com/en/german-police-conduct-raids-on-alleged-people-smugglers/a-70957059>

⁴⁴⁸⁴ The Calais Group agrees on priorities in fighting illegal migrant smuggling, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 10 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/pressemitteilungen/EN/2024/12/calais-group.html>

⁴⁴⁸⁵ Fighting illegal smuggling of migrants, Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community (Berlin) 10 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/kurzmeldungen/EN/2024/12/london-jointaction-en.html>

⁴⁴⁸⁶ National Action Plan to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in Human Beings and Protect Trafficked Persons, Federal Ministry for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (Berlin) 11 December 2024. Access Date: 5 June 2025. <https://www.bmfsfj.de/resource/blob/258214/1dbf23a291e87ad569dadbb77e97c369/nationaler-aktionsplan-menschenhandel-englische-version-data.pdf>

⁴⁴⁸⁷ G7 Foreign Ministers' Declaration on Maritime Security and Prosperity, G7 Information Centre (Charlevoix) 14 March 2025. Access date: 21 March 2025. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/250314-declaration.html>

On 19 March 2025, German law enforcement authorities carried out a joint operation with Belgian authorities and Europol targeting a Germany-based transnational migrant smuggling network.⁴⁴⁸⁸ The operation helped to counter human smuggling operations across Europe and enhanced international law enforcement cooperation.

Germany has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. Germany has taken strong action to both prevent and counter migrant smuggling and human trafficking. It has also taken strong action to dismantle criminal networks involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking but has not taken sufficient action to disrupt these organizations' business models.

Thus, Germany receives a score of 0.

Analyst: Ryan Do

Italy: 0

Italy has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen its actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 24 June 2024, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni welcomed the Prime Minister of Hungary, Viktor Orbán. They discussed the shared values between the two countries on strategies to enhance the management of migration flows.⁴⁴⁸⁹ Prime Minister Meloni focused on targeting transnational trafficking groups. Both members also advocated for partnerships with the countries of origin to address the source of migration and new approaches to managing migration.

On 26 June 2024, Prime Minister Meloni addressed the Chamber of Deputies where she emphasized her priority to partner with countries of origin and transit in addressing mass irregular immigration.⁴⁴⁹⁰ She highlighted the success of Italy's initiative of signing memoranda of understanding with Egypt and Tunisia to address migration and called on other countries to follow this model to address the root cause of migration.

On 26 June 2024, the Italian national police force, Polizia di Stato, announced the success of the operation, "Chinese Shuttles" in apprehending members of a Chinese criminal organization that facilitated human smuggling.⁴⁴⁹¹ There were 77 illegal migrants found and nine individuals were arrested. The illegal migrants were subject to forced labour to pay off their debt to the smugglers who facilitated their trip. The successful operation demonstrated dedication to tackling transnational organized crime and reinforced the importance of dismantling smuggling networks that exploit vulnerable people.

On 4 July 2024, Prime Minister Meloni met with President Alexander Stubb of the Republic of Finland.⁴⁴⁹² The pair discussed matters of importance to both countries, where managing irregular migration was on the agenda.

⁴⁴⁸⁸ 7 arrested for facilitating migrant smuggling across the English Channel, Europol (The Hague) 19 March 2025. Access Date: 8 April 2025. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/7-arrested-for-facilitating-migrant-smuggling-across-english-channel>

⁴⁴⁸⁹ President Meloni's press statement with Prime Minister Orbán of Hungary, Italian Government (Rome) 24 June 2024. Access Date: 29 September 2024. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-press-statement-prime-minister-orb-n-hungary/26118>

⁴⁴⁹⁰ President Meloni's address to the Chamber of Deputies ahead of the European Council meeting on 27-28 June, Italian Government (Rome) 26 June 2024. Access Date: 29 September 2024. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-address-chamber-deputies-ahead-european-council-meeting-27-28-june/26151>

⁴⁴⁹¹ Trieste: operazione "Chinese Shuttles" contro immigrazione clandestina, Polizia di Stato (Rome) 26 June 2024. Translation Provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 29 September 2024. <https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/15667c305d427c2069197247>

⁴⁴⁹² Meeting with the President of the Republic of Finland, Italian Government (Rome) 4 July 2024. Access Date: 29 September 2024. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/meeting-president-republic-finland/26175>

On 11 July 2024, Prime Minister Meloni met with Prime Minister Kier Starmer of the United Kingdom.⁴⁴⁹³ The pair exchanged their views and intentions to boost collaboration on addressing irregular migration.

On 6 August 2024, State Police investigators executed an order of custody under house arrest against two individuals in Terni investigated for association criminal conspiracy, aiding and abetting the illegal stay of foreigners on the national territory and false.⁴⁴⁹⁴

On 16 September 2024, Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni met with Prime Minister Starmer. The two leaders declared their intention to strengthen cooperation in the fight against human trafficking.⁴⁴⁹⁵ In this field, the leaders placed an emphasis on judicial proceedings.

On 24 September 2024, the Council of Ministers approved a draft law which ratifies a cooperation agreement between Italy and Côte d'Ivoire.⁴⁴⁹⁶ In the agreement, a key priority is cooperation in addressing trafficking of persons and illicit trafficking of migrants.

On 26 September 2024, Prime Minister Meloni spoke with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz over the phone concerning migration issues in Europe.⁴⁴⁹⁷ Prime Minister Meloni and Chancellor Scholz agreed to bolster partnerships with countries of origin and transit and tackle human trafficking.

On 4 October 2024, G7 Interior and Security Ministers met in Mirabella Eclano where they formulated an action plan to resolve border management issues.⁴⁴⁹⁸ The G7 Action Plan included commitments to improve law enforcement capabilities, cooperation with both G7 member countries and countries of origin and transit and enhance general border management processes to prevent migrant smuggling and other transborder criminal activities.

On 4 October 2024, Minister of the Interior Matteo Piantedosi signed a declaration of intent aiming to establish an 'Italian-French Operational Research Unit' to combat illegal immigration.⁴⁴⁹⁹ The purpose of the initiative is to counter illegal migration but also to identify possible criminal networks dedicated to aiding and abetting illegal immigration by land across the Ventimiglia border and neighbouring areas.

⁴⁴⁹³ President Meloni meets with Prime Minister Starmer at NATO Summit, Italian Government (Rome) 11 July 2024. Access Date: 29 September 2024. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-meets-prime-minister-starmer-nato-summit/26209>

⁴⁴⁹⁴ Illegal immigration: 2 arrests in Terni, Polizia di Stato (Rome) 6 August 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 6 March 2025. <https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/153066b20b91632b1253071797>

⁴⁴⁹⁵ Incontro del Presidente Meloni con il Primo Ministro del Regno Unito Starmer, Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Rome) 16 September 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 19 October 2024. <https://www.governo.it/it/articolo/incontro-del-presidente-meloni-con-il-primo-ministro-del-regno-unito-starmer/26554>

⁴⁴⁹⁶ Press release of the Council of Ministers no. 97, Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Rome) 27 September 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.governo.it/it/articolo/comunicato-stampa-del-consiglio-dei-ministri-n-97/26672>

⁴⁴⁹⁷ President Meloni's telephone conversation with Chancellor Scholz, Italian Government (Rome) 26 September 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-s-telephone-conversation-chancellor-scholz/26665>

⁴⁴⁹⁸ Annex A: G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants, G7 Information Centre (Mirabella Eclano) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 12 November 2024. <https://g7.utoronto.ca/justice/2024-interior-action-plan.html>

⁴⁴⁹⁹ G7 of Interior Ministers in Mirabella Eclano, bilateral between Piantedosi and his French counterpart Retailleau, Ministero dell'Interno (Rome) 4 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 6 March 2025. <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/stampa-e-comunicazione/comunicati-stampa/g7-dei-ministri-dellinterno-mirabella-eclano-bilaterale-piantedosi-e-suo-omologo-francese-retailleau>

On 11 October 2024, Minister Piantedosi met with the Brazilian Minister of Justice and Public Security Ricardo Lewandowski.⁴⁵⁰⁰ Minister Piantedosi confirmed future cooperation between Italy and Brazil in addressing transnational organized crime such as human and migrant trafficking.

On 11 October 2024, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe announced the completion of an anti-human trafficking exercise based in Italy.⁴⁵⁰¹ The governments of Italy, the United States, France and Germany contributed funds and equipment for the exercise.

On 16 October 2024, State Police investigators carried out a detention of a subject in Milan under investigation for association aimed at aiding and abetting illegal immigration.⁴⁵⁰² The investigation was a part of a broader joint investigation initiative including Italian, Dutch, British and Spanish authorities.

On 18 October 2024, the Department for Equal Opportunities (DEO) carried out a communication campaign which aimed to raise public awareness of human trafficking.⁴⁵⁰³ The DEO also offered a toll-free number that victims of trafficking can call.

On 29 October 2024, Prime Minister Meloni participated in the Italy-Libya Business forum held in Tripoli, where she met with the Prime Minister of Libya, Abdul Hamid Dabaiba.⁴⁵⁰⁴ The two leaders discussed strengthening the bilateral cooperation between Italy and Libya and touched on migration management and the prevention of human trafficking.

On 19 November 2024, the Department of Public Security of the Minister of the Interior co-organized with the United Nations Office for Drug and Crime Control in Central and West Africa the 'Fourth Regional Conference on the Fight Against Migrant Trafficking and Human Trafficking' hosted in Rome.⁴⁵⁰⁵

On 26 November 2024, G7 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment made at the Apulia Summit to address irregular migration and its causes, including poverty, instability, and climate change.⁴⁵⁰⁶

On 16 January 2025, the State Police arrested the leader of the criminal group 'Arrow Baga' for evading an arrest warrant related to human trafficking, extortion, and sexual violence.⁴⁵⁰⁷ The Italian Police stated the arrest was a part of the ongoing intensification of the fight against illegal immigration. This arrest contributes to efforts to dismantle criminal networks.

⁴⁵⁰⁰ Piantedosi incontra il Ministro della Giustizia e della Sicurezza Pubblica del Brasile Ricardo Lewandowski, Ministero dell'Interno (Rome) 11 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 26 November 2024.

⁴⁵⁰¹ Anti-trafficking practitioners meet in Italy for first Mediterranean regional simulation-based training exercise, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (Vienna) 11 October 2024. Access Date: 1 June 2025. <https://www.osce.org/cthb/578104>

⁴⁵⁰² Aiding and abetting illegal immigration, 11 arrests, Polizia di Stato (Rome) 16 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 6 March 2025. <https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/1996670f7a1e535af196996647>

⁴⁵⁰³ Campagna di comunicazione "Giornata contro la tratta degli esseri umani," Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Rome) 18 October 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 19 October 2024. <https://www.governo.it/it/media/campagna-di-comunicazione-giornata-contro-la-tratta-degli-esseri-umani/26850>

⁴⁵⁰⁴ President Meloni attends Italy-Libya Business Forum in Tripoli, Italian Government (Rome) 29 October 2024. Access Date: 12 November 2024. <https://www.governo.it/en/articolo/president-meloni-attends-italy-libya-business-forum-tripoli/2694>

⁴⁵⁰⁵ Roma ospita la Quarta Conferenza sulla lotta al traffico di migranti, Ministero dell'Interno (Rome) 19 November 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 26 November 2024. <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/notizie/roma-ospita-quarta-conferenza-sulla-lotta-traffico-migranti>

⁴⁵⁰⁶ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

⁴⁵⁰⁷ Crotone: la Polizia di Stato arresta pericoloso latitante condannato per il reato di associazione a delinquere finalizzata al traffico di esseri umani, Polizia di Stato (Rome) 17 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 10 February 2024. <https://questure.poliziadistato.it/it/Crotone/articolo/1146678a01bb0de7a077272444>

On 20 January 2025, Minister Piantedosi signed a Memorandum on Joint Patrols with his Croatian and Slovenian counterparts.⁴⁵⁰⁸ Under this agreement, Italian forces will support Croatian border security to combat illegal migration.

On 14 March 2025, Minister of Foreign Affairs Antonio Tajani issued a joint statement alongside the G7 foreign ministers, reaffirming the G7's commitment to maritime security and combating illegal maritime crimes.⁴⁵⁰⁹ These commitments include combating human trafficking.

On 22 March 2025, the Central Operation Service arrested six individuals in an operation to take down a criminal network engaged in human and migrant smuggling.⁴⁵¹⁰ This operation was conducted simultaneously in Italy and Iceland, due to the transnational presence of the network.

Italy has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. Italy has taken strong action to both prevent and counter migrant smuggling and human trafficking, such as through diplomatic meetings. It has also taken strong action to dismantle criminal networks involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking but has not taken sufficient action to disrupt these organizations' business models.

Thus, Italy receives a score of 0.

Analyst: Samantha de Vertenil

Japan: 0

Japan has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 30 September 2024, Minister of the Political Section of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations Takayuki Iriya called for further efforts by international and regional organizations and UN members to prevent combat human trafficking and smuggling, and assist Libya in building capacity, according to relevant and applicable international law.⁴⁵¹¹ Japan emphasized the importance of working to protect migrants from these human rights abuses, particularly in Libya.

On 30 September 2024, First Secretary Iriya Takayuki of the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations expressed Japan's support for efforts to tackle migrant smuggling and human trafficking in conflict zones, particularly as pertinent to the high sea off the coast of Libya, in the UN Security Council.⁴⁵¹² To this end, First Secretary Takayuki particularly underscored Japan's support for multilateral engagement, including through the

⁴⁵⁰⁸ Il ministro Piantedosi a Nova Gorica incontra gli omologhi di Slovenia e Croazia, Ministero dell'Interno (Rome) 20 January 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 1 June 2025. <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/stampa-e-comunicazione/comunicati-stampa/ministro-piantedosi-nova-gorica-incontra-omologhi-slovenia-e-croazia>

⁴⁵⁰⁹ G7 Foreign Ministers' Declaration on Maritime Security and Prosperity, G7 Information Centre (Charlevoix) 14 March 2025. Access date: 21 March 2025. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/250314-declaration.html>

⁴⁵¹⁰ Tratta di esseri umani, favoreggiamento immigrazione clandestina: 6 arresti, Polizia di Stato (Rome) 22 March 2025. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.poliziadistato.it/articolo/152667dea85c794c8628070445>

⁴⁵¹¹ Statement by Minister IRIYA Takayuki, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, at the United Nations Security Council Briefing on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security (Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons in the High Sea off the Coast of Libya), Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations (New York) 30 September 2024. Access Date: 16 November 2024. https://www.un.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/iriya093024.html

⁴⁵¹² Statement by Minister IRIYA Takayuki, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, at the United Nations Security Council Briefing on the Maintenance of International Peace and Security (Smuggling of Migrants and Trafficking in Persons in the High Sea off the Coast of Libya), Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations (New York), 30 September 2024. Access Date: April 10 2025 https://www.un.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/iriya093024.html

European Union's Naval Operation IRINI and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya, as means to address human trafficking and smuggling in the region.

On 4 October 2024, G7 Interior and Security Ministers announced the G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants.⁴⁵¹³ The priorities of the plan are to improve collaboration and communication between partner countries, strengthen border management, and discourage migrants by informing them of the risks.

On 26 November 2024, G7 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment made at the Apulia Summit to address irregular migration and its causes, including poverty, instability, and climate change.⁴⁵¹⁴

On 29 November 2024, the Embassy of Japan in the Philippines oversaw the handing over of investigative equipment purchased by the Japanese government for the Philippine National Police.⁴⁵¹⁵ The Government of Japan purchased this equipment to support the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's "Drugs and Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia" project, countering criminal networks that smuggle persons.

On 7 February 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba Shigeru and US President Donald Trump issued a United States-Japan Joint Leaders' Statement.⁴⁵¹⁶ Prime Minister Ishiba and President Trump underscored their mutual commitment to preserving the integrity of travel systems and agreed to deepen cooperation on traveler screening and information exchange to counter criminal movements and irregular migration.

On 11 March 2025, Foreign Minister Iwaya Takeshi held a press conference in which he addressed the further measures that the Japanese government was planning on taking to prevent human trafficking of minors, following the rescue of two Japanese nationals from a scam-based human trafficking operation at the Myanmar-Thailand border.⁴⁵¹⁷ Amongst the measures announced were closer coordination with the National Police Agency and greater outreach to minors at Japanese airports through campaigns aimed at warning them regarding the threat of scam based trafficking, indicating strong action towards the prevention and countering of the illegal smuggling of persons.

On 14 March 2025, Minister Iwaya issued a joint statement alongside the G7 foreign ministers, reaffirming the G7's commitment to maritime security and combating illegal maritime crimes.⁴⁵¹⁸ These commitments include combating human trafficking.

On 20 March 2025, Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka Kamoshida Naoaki, inaugurated the renovated Bureau for the Prevention and Investigation of Abuse of Children and Women (PCWB) of the International Organization for Migration (IOM).⁴⁵¹⁹ The project, which was financed by the Government of Japan, brought about the renovation of the National Centre for Missing and Exploited Children

⁴⁵¹³ Annex A: G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants, G7 Information Centre (Mirabella Eclano) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/justice/2024-interior-action-plan.html>

⁴⁵¹⁴ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

⁴⁵¹⁵ Handover Ceremony of Investigative Equipment to the Philippine National Police, Embassy of Japan in the Philippines (Manila), 29 November 2024. Access Date: 19 April 2025. https://www.ph.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/11_000001_01717.html

⁴⁵¹⁶ United States-Japan Joint Leaders' Statement, White House(Washington), 7 February 2025. Access Date: April 10 2025 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/02/united-states-japan-joint-leaders-statement/>

⁴⁵¹⁷ Press Conference by Foreign Minister IWAYA Takeshi, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Tokyo), 11 March 2025. Access Date: April 10 2025 https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/kaiken/kaikenwe_000001_00151.html

⁴⁵¹⁸ G7 Foreign Ministers' Declaration on Maritime Security and Prosperity, G7 Information Centre (Charlevoix) 14 March 2025. Access date: 21 March 2025. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/250314-declaration.html>

⁴⁵¹⁹ IOM and Japan Strengthen the Bureau for the Prevention and Investigation of Abuse of Children and Women to Combat Trafficking and Abuse, Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka (Colombo), 20 March 2025. Access Date: April 10 2025 https://www.lk.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/11_000001_00588.html

and the Anti-Human Trafficking Unit based at the PCWB, which support the IOM's broader work with the National Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force in Sri-Lanka.

On 10 April 2025, the Embassy of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia, alongside the IOM, announced a new initiative to strengthen border management and protect vulnerable migrants in the country.⁴⁵²⁰ Japan's Ambassador to the Kingdom of Cambodia Ueno Atsushi noted that this new initiative would enhance the capacity of Cambodian authorities in addressing trafficking and transnational organized crime.

Japan has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen its actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. Japan has taken strong actions to prevent and counter trafficking and organised crime, both issuing strong statements in international fora and taking strong action to address threats of migrant smuggling and human trafficking within its own borders and in collaboration with regional partners. However, Japan has not taken strong action to dismantle criminal networks or disrupt their business models.

Japan has partially complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. Japan has taken action to support initiatives against human trafficking and recognizes the importance of collaborating with other countries and international organizations. However, Japan has taken mostly weak action and has not addressed the dismantling of criminal organizations or the disruption of their business models.

Thus, Japan receives a score of 0.

Analysts: Anali Arambula Galindo and Lorenzo Songsare Sherry

United Kingdom: +1

The United Kingdom has fully complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 7 July 2024, Home Secretary Yvette Cooper announced the launch of the Border Security Command, a new agency dedicated to strengthening Britain's border management.⁴⁵²¹ Border Security Command will cooperate with other law enforcement and intelligence agencies to secure borders and apprehend smuggling gangs. Additionally, the United Kingdom Home Office announced the preparation of new legislation that will provide more powers and stronger measures for law agencies to stop immigration crime.

On 12 July 2024, the National Crime Agency (NCA) announced the success of an investigation which convicted key members of the Teesside crime group for trafficking migrants into the UK.⁴⁵²² This demonstrates the law enforcement agencies' continued commitment to dismantling criminal networks and securing UK borders.

⁴⁵²⁰ New Initiative to Strengthen Border Management and Protect Vulnerable Migrants, Embassy of Japan to the Kingdom of Cambodia (Phnom Penh), 10 April 2025. Access Date: April 10 2025 <https://www.kh.emb-japan.go.jp/files/100828154.pdf>

⁴⁵²¹ Home Secretary launches new Border Security Command, Home Office (London) 7 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-launches-new-border-security-command>

⁴⁵²² Teesside crime group convicted of trafficking migrants into the UK, National Crime Agency (London) 12 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/teesside-crime-group-convicted-of-trafficking-migrants-into-the-uk>

On 17 July 2024, Prime Minister Keir Starmer committed to assist the fight against criminal organizations engaging in smuggling and trafficking people.⁴⁵²³ This effort is a collaboration between the UK, Europol, Frontex, and other partners.

On 18 July 2024, the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO) announced a funding package worth GBP84 million over three years to support projects in Africa and the Middle East to address the source of illegal migration.⁴⁵²⁴ This funding will support projects that address the reasons motivating individuals to flee their homes. Furthermore, the Prime Minister Starmer committed to working with Global South and European countries to tackle illegal migration.

On 18 July 2024, Prime Minister Starmer announced new measures in collaboration with Slovenia and Slovakia to combat organized crime and smuggling of people during the UK-lead fourth European Political Community Summit in Woodstock, UK. Furthermore, the UK is to provide up to GBP 85 million over the next three years for projects focusing on Africa as well as the Middle East to address challenges that lead for individuals to cross the Mediterranean Sea with small

On 24 July 2024, the NCA announced the jailing of Eglantin Doksani, a migrant smuggler who arranged crossings to the UK in small boats.⁴⁵²⁵ Stopping organized immigration crime is a key priority for the NCA and this arrest illustrates the ongoing efforts made to apprehend criminals.

On 25 July 2024, Home Office announced the removal of 46 foreign criminals and immigration offenders on charter flights to Vietnam and Timor-Leste.⁴⁵²⁶ This marks a shift in immigration policy to end irregular migration, with the removal of flight planning for Rwanda and instead partnering with nations to return individuals to their home countries.

On 26 July 2024, the FCDO announced commitments to tackle migrant smuggling and organized crime at the fourth European Political Community summit.⁴⁵²⁷ This was the first summit where leaders held discussions on migration producing deals between the UK, Slovakia, and Slovenia to tackle organized crime.

On 21 August 2024, Home Secretary Yvette Cooper announced plans to hire at least 100 new law enforcement agents for the NCA.⁴⁵²⁸ These agents will focus solely on limiting the impact of organised crime networks and benefit from the illicit migration while exploiting individuals that are to seek asylum.

⁴⁵²³ 'Security at the heart of UK's reset with Europe': PM to tell world leaders as he pledges closer cooperation to dismantle European smuggling rings and bring order to British borders, Prime Minister's Office (London) 17 July 2024. Access Date: 15 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/security-at-the-heart-of-uks-reset-with-europe-pm-to-tell-world-leaders-as-he-pledges-closer-cooperation-to-dismantle-european-smuggling-rings-and>

⁴⁵²⁴ UK steps up work to reduce illegal migration, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (London) 18 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-steps-up-work-to-reduce-illegal-migration>

⁴⁵²⁵ People smuggler who arranged spaces on Channel boat crossings jailed following NCA investigation, National Crime Agency (London) 24 July 2024. <https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/people-smuggler-who-arranged-spaces-on-channel-boat-crossings-jailed-following-nca-investigation>

⁴⁵²⁶ Criminals and immigration offenders removed on charter flight, Home Office (London) 25 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/criminals-and-immigration-offenders-removed-on-charter-flight>

⁴⁵²⁷ The fourth European Political Community summit held at Blenheim in the United Kingdom: UK statement to the OSCE, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (London) 26 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/the-fourth-european-political-community-summit-held-at-blenheim-in-the-united-kingdom-uk-statement-to-the-osce>

⁴⁵²⁸ 'Home Secretary to recruit 100 specialist to target people smuggling gangs, The Guardian (London) August 23 2024. Access Date: 10 December 2024 <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/article/2024/aug/21/home-secretary-to-recruit-100-specialists-to-target-people-smuggling-gangs>

On 23 August 2024, Home Office Criminal and Financial inspectors detained a group of migrant smugglers as part of the UK's efforts towards strengthening its borders and combating people smuggling activities.⁴⁵²⁹ The smugglers had been transporting migrants in unsafe conditions.

On 27 August 2024, the UK government pledged GBP10.5 million to provide new technologies to three border checkpoints needed for the European Union's new biometric border identification system.⁴⁵³⁰ The ports, which have already heavily invested in preparation for the change, will be upgraded with photo and fingerprinting capabilities.

On 6 September 2024, Home Secretary Cooper stated the importance of eliminating and holding accountable people smuggling networks, reporting 100 new expert inspectors to track and dismantle these organizations internationally.⁴⁵³¹ Additionally, NCA Director General Graeme Biggar presented the results of collaborative efforts with Libyan forces to fight against migrant trafficking groups.

On 16 September 2024, Prime Minister Starmer met with Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. The two leaders declared their intention to strengthen cooperation in the fight against human trafficking, with an emphasis on judicial proceedings.⁴⁵³²

On 17 September 2024, Home Secretary Cooper announced that the new Border Security Command (BSC) agency would receive GBP75 million from the UK government, taken from the Rwanda deportation project.⁴⁵³³ The BSC, which aims to take down migrant smuggling gangs and trafficking networks in the UK and across Europe, will receive surveillance technologies and intelligence resources.

On 9 October 2024, the UK government pledged GBP4 million to the United Nations Migration Multi-Partner Trust Fund (MMPTF) to tackle irregular migration, smuggling and trafficking.⁴⁵³⁴ The MMPTF fights transnational crime related to migrant smuggling, by providing humanitarian and logistical aid in countries of origin.

On 4 November 2024, Prime Minister Starmer reiterated his commitment to eliminate criminal organizations involved in people smuggling.⁴⁵³⁵ To do so, the Prime Minister allocated an additional GBP75 million to a total of GBP150 million to increase resources towards the investigation and dismantling of people smuggling criminal organizations. Moreover, the Home Office will spend an additional GBP24 million to counter serious organised crime which include but are not limited to trafficking and exploitation.

⁴⁵²⁹ People smuggling ring jailed for cramming migrants in boot of car, Home Office (London) 23 August 2024. Access Date: 15 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/people-smuggling-ring-jailed-for-cramming-migrants-in-boot-of-car>

⁴⁵³⁰ UK to spend £10.5m on new EU border checks, British Broadcasting Corporation (London) 27 August 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c4gz9n06rxdo>

⁴⁵³¹ Home Secretary sets out 'moral imperative' to stop smuggling gangs, Home Office (London) 6 September 2024. Access Date: 15 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/home-secretary-sets-out-moral-imperative-to-stop-smuggling-gangs>

⁴⁵³² Incontro del Presidente Meloni con il Primo Ministro del Regno Unito Starmer, Italian Government Presidency of the Council of Ministers (Rome) 16 September 2024. Translation provided by Google Translate. Access Date: 19 October 2024. <https://www.governo.it/it/articolo/incontro-del-presidente-meloni-con-il-primo-ministro-del-regno-unito-starmer/26554>

⁴⁵³³ UK uses funds from scrapped Rwanda deportation plan to boost border security, Radio France Internationale (Paris) 17 September 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.rfi.fr/en/international/20240917-uk-uses-funds-from-scrapped-rwanda-deportation-asylum-plan-to-boost-border-security>

⁴⁵³⁴ New UK money to combat human trafficking, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 9 October 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-uk-money-to-combat-human-trafficking>

⁴⁵³⁵ Prime Minister unveils game changing investment to tackle national security threat from people smuggling gangs, Prime Minister's Office (London) 4 November 2024. Access Date: 15 November 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-unveils-game-changing-investment-to-tackle-national-security-threat-from-people-smuggling-gangs>

On 13 November 2024, as part of a joint operation with Dutch and Belgian agencies, the NCA arrested a man accused of supplying boats and engines to smugglers.⁴⁵³⁶ The supposedly “highly dangerous” boats were intended for use in Belgium and France.

On 15 November 2024, the United Kingdom established new guidelines to its immigration policy.⁴⁵³⁷ Among other things, this provides people who were subject to human trafficking with temporary refuge.

On 20 November 2024, Foreign Secretary David Lammy signed an agreement with Moldova that aims to tackle irregular migration and create a strategic defense partnership between the two countries.⁴⁵³⁸ The agreement will promote stronger border security and help facilitate the voluntary and enforced return of Moldovan migrants.

On 26 November 2024, G7 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment made at the Apulia Summit to address irregular migration and its causes, including poverty, instability, and climate change.⁴⁵³⁹

On 28 November 2024, Minister for Development Anneliese Dodds pledged a total of GBP1.98 billion to the International Development Association.⁴⁵⁴⁰ The association aims to combat the causes of irregular migration by providing financial assistance to countries with low income.

On 28 November 2024, the United Kingdom signed a security agreement with Iraq focusing on gangs and organised crime which are engaged in smuggling to bolster border security.⁴⁵⁴¹ The agreement includes a commitment of GBP300,000 dedicated to training of local border guards focussing on organisation migration. Furthermore, the agreement seeks to counter the misinformation about smuggling and inform about the reality of this organised crime.

On 10 December 2024, the Home Office published a policy paper outlining a new approach to tackling Organized Immigration Crime (OIC) and enhancing border security through the BSC.⁴⁵⁴² Recognizing the growing threat of OIC, the BSC is investing GBP150 million for new technology, law enforcement capabilities, and specialist officers to combat OIC. Additionally, they note that the BSC’s scope will expand beyond irregular migration to address broader threats such as illicit commodity trafficking and technological advancements used by criminals to exploit borders

On 10 December 2024, Home Secretary Cooper and German Federal Minister of the Interior and Community Nancy Faeser signed a joint agreement to dismantle migrant trafficking organizations through strengthened

⁴⁵³⁶ Joint investigation sees suspected small boat supplier arrested in the Netherlands, National Crime Agency (London) 14 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/news/joint-investigation-sees-suspected-small-boat-supplier-arrested-in-the-netherlands>

⁴⁵³⁷ New UK Immigration Rules for Illegal Immigrants in 2024, Gulbenkian Adonian (London) 30 July 2024. Access Date: 15 November 2024. <https://www.gulbenkian.co.uk/new-immigration-rules-uk-2021-for-illegal-immigrants>

⁴⁵³⁸ UK signs new agreements on migration, defence & security with Moldova, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 20 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-signs-new-agreements-on-migration-defence-security-with-moldova>

⁴⁵³⁹ New UK investment to unlock billions to tackle root causes of irregular migration, climate change and growth crises, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 28 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-uk-investment-to-unlock-billions-to-tackle-root-causes-of-irregular-migration-climate-change-and-growth-crises--2>

⁴⁵⁴⁰ New UK investment to unlock billions to tackle root causes of irregular migration, climate change and growth crises, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 28 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-uk-investment-to-unlock-billions-to-tackle-root-causes-of-irregular-migration-climate-change-and-growth-crises--2>

⁴⁵⁴¹ UK/Iraq border security pact to target smuggling gangs, Home Office (London) 28 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-iraq-border-security-pact-to-target-smuggling-gangs>

⁴⁵⁴² Delivering Border Security, Home Office (London) 10 December 2024. Access Date: 21 December 2024. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/delivering-border-security-statement/delivering-border-security>

inter-governmental collaboration.⁴⁵⁴³ Under the new agreement, the German government will prosecute the facilitation of migrant smuggling into the United Kingdom as a criminal offense. Further, UK and German authorities committed to sharing data and expertise in the investigation of organized criminal networks, with a specific focus on removing content related to immigration crime, from social media platforms.

On 12 December 2024, Security Minister Dan Jarvis announced the creation of a unified data-sharing system between the Home Office, law enforcement and financial sector industry partners to detect and disrupt organized financial crime and money laundering.⁴⁵⁴⁴ Through enhanced public-private partnership and information sharing, the system fosters a collaborative approach to targeting the funding sources and financial assets of organized crime networks.

On 16 December 2024, Home Secretary Cooper committed GBP8 million in equipment and technology to strengthen evidence collection for investigations of organized immigration crime.⁴⁵⁴⁵ The commitment includes GBP5 million for the implementation of body worn cameras and a GBP3 million investment in new fingerprinting kits to strengthen identity checks on high-risk individuals.

On 2 January 2025, Home Secretary Cooper introduced new interim orders targeting networks of organized migrant smuggling and trafficking.⁴⁵⁴⁶ The orders, which can be applied at discretion by law enforcement agencies, place heightened restrictions on the travel, communications and finances of individuals under investigation for organized immigration crime.

On 8 January 2025, Foreign Secretary Lammy announced the creation of a standalone sanctions regime, dedicated to addressing irregular migration and organized immigration crime.⁴⁵⁴⁷ The first of its kind globally, the regime will target the root funding sources and illicit financial assets of organized smuggling networks to deter migrant trafficking.

On 31 January 2025, Foreign Secretary Lammy committed GBP5 million in funding to address the root causes of irregular migration in Tunisia.⁴⁵⁴⁸ The package fosters strengthened bilateral collaboration between the Tunisian and UK governments to reduce patterns of irregular migration and includes dedicated funding for programs aimed at deterring the exploitation of vulnerable groups by organized migrant smuggling networks.

On 7 February 2025, Foreign Secretary Lammy and Minister for Border Security and Asylum Angela Eagle announced that the United Kingdom will co-host the 2025 Berlin Process Summit, facilitating multi-lateral collaboration to dismantle networks of migrant trafficking and exploitation.⁴⁵⁴⁹ The Summit will foster dialogue

⁴⁵⁴³ UK and Germany set out joint action for people smuggling law reform, Home Office (London) 10 December 2024. Access Date: 5 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-germany-set-out-joint-action-for-people-smuggling-law-reform>

⁴⁵⁴⁴ Working with partners to defeat economic crime, Home Office (London) 12 December 2024. Access Date: 1 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/working-with-partners-to-defeat-economic-crime>

⁴⁵⁴⁵ Huge increase in migration returns and illegal working arrests, Home Office (London) 16 December 2024. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/huge-increase-in-migration-returns-and-illegal-working-arrests>

⁴⁵⁴⁶ Serious crime laws to be overhauled to combat people-smuggling gangs, Home Office (London) 2 January 2025. Access Date: 2 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/serious-crime-laws-to-be-overhauled-to-combat-people-smuggling-gangs>

⁴⁵⁴⁷ UK to launch world first sanctions regime to snare people smugglers travelling upstream, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 8 January 2025. Access Date: 2 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-launch-world-first-sanctions-regime-to-snare-people-smugglers-travelling-upstream>

⁴⁵⁴⁸ UK partnership with Tunisia to target root causes of irregular migration, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 31 January 2025. Access Date: 2 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-partnership-with-tunisia-to-target-root-causes-of-irregular-migration>

⁴⁵⁴⁹ UK to drive international cooperation on irregular migration as host of Western Balkans Summit, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 7 February 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-drive-international-cooperation-on-irregular-migration-as-host-of-western-balkans-summit>

with European partners in the Western Balkans to target regional routes of irregular migration to the United Kingdom.

On 14 February 2025, Foreign Secretary Lammy announced GBP8 million in funding to address the root causes of irregular migration in East Africa, a targeted effort to disrupt the business models of organized migrant smuggling networks.⁴⁵⁵⁰ The package will bolster access to domestic education and employment within Ethiopia and Kenya to facilitate the local economic welfare of prospective migrants.

On 14 February 2025, Foreign Secretary Lammy co-hosted a migration roundtable at the Munich Security Conference, facilitating multilateral dialogue on the use of innovative tools to target organized migrant smuggling, trafficking and exploitation.⁴⁵⁵¹ At the conference, Secretary Lammy encouraged representatives from the United States, the Netherlands, Poland, Bulgaria, Romania and Germany to consider the implementation of a domestic sanctions regime against migrant smuggling networks to dismantle sources of funding for organized immigration crime.

On 27 February 2025, Deputy High Commissioner to India Christina Scott launched ‘Visa Fraud Ton Bacho’, a public awareness campaign aimed at protecting Indian citizens from visa fraud scams perpetrated by migrant smuggling gangs and trafficking networks.⁴⁵⁵² Through a dedicated support line, the campaign provides access to official guidance on the legal routes of travel to the United Kingdom and identifies the most common claims of visa fraud scams to deter the physical or financial exploitation of prospective migrants.

On 4 March 2025, Minister Eagle launched an anti-migrant trafficking digital awareness campaign in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, expanding international public awareness efforts to combat migrant smuggling operations.⁴⁵⁵³ The initiative aims to counter targeted misinformation spread by criminal organizations to protect prospective migrants from the risk of exploitation.

On 4 March 2025, representatives from the United Kingdom signed a joint communiqué on irregular migration and organized immigration crime with the Government of Vietnam at the third annual UK-Vietnam Migration Dialogue in Hanoi, Vietnam.⁴⁵⁵⁴ The communiqué calls for strengthened inter-governmental efforts to combat migrant smuggling and exploitation, such as targeted deterrence communications, information sharing, joint awareness campaigns of legal migration routes and bilateral cooperation between law enforcement agencies.

On 7 March 2025, Border Security Commander Martin Hewitt and France’s Special Representative on Immigration for the Minister of State Patrick Stefani signed the Franco-British Upstream Working Group, a collaborative agreement aimed at combating organized immigration crime.⁴⁵⁵⁵ The agreement calls for inter-governmental action across four shared priorities including disrupting criminal networks involved in the facilitation of migrant smuggling.

⁴⁵⁵⁰ European partners urged to develop sanctions to smash people smuggling gangs, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 14 February 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/european-partners-urged-to-develop-sanctions-to-smash-people-smuggling-gangs>

⁴⁵⁵¹ European partners urged to develop sanctions to smash people smuggling gangs, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 14 February 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/european-partners-urged-to-develop-sanctions-to-smash-people-smuggling-gangs>

⁴⁵⁵² UK launches visa fraud awareness campaign ‘Visa Fraud Ton Bacho’, British High Commission New Delhi (New Delhi) 27 February 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-launches-visa-fraud-awareness-campaign-visa-fraud-ton-bacho>

⁴⁵⁵³ UK expands campaign to stop migrant smugglers and their lies, Home Office (London) 4 March 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-expands-campaign-to-stop-migrant-smugglers-and-their-lies>

⁴⁵⁵⁴ UK and Vietnam sign joint communiqué at annual migration dialogue, Home Office (London) 4 March 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-vietnam-sign-joint-communique-at-annual-migration-dialogue>

⁴⁵⁵⁵ The UK deepens cooperation with France on people smuggling, Home Office (London) 7 March 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-uk-deepens-cooperation-with-france-on-people-smuggling>

On 7 March 2025, Deputy High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands and Nauru Emma Davis held a workshop aimed at enhancing anti-corruption and organized money laundering investigations in the Solomon Islands.⁴⁵⁵⁶ The initiative aimed to better equip prosecutors in utilizing financial intelligence tools, enhance regional cooperation between prosecutorial agencies and financial investigation units, and build technical and operational capacity to address financial crime, a critical source of funding for organized crime networks.

On 30 March 2025, Home Secretary Cooper introduced new regulations requiring private companies hiring in the ‘gig economy’ and zero-hours sectors to conduct employment eligibility checks.⁴⁵⁵⁷ The measure will require companies in construction, food delivery and courier services industries to verify the immigration status and work eligibility of employees, an effort to disrupt the business models of migrant smuggling networks advertising unregulated employment opportunities to prospective migrants.

On 31 March 2025, Prime Minister Starmer and Home Secretary Cooper hosted officials from France, Iraq, Vietnam and the United States at the Organized Immigration Crime Summit in London to facilitate multilateral collaboration in combating migrant smuggling, trafficking, and exploitation.⁴⁵⁵⁸ The Summit encouraged collaborative dialogues on targeting the supply chains, finances and platforms utilized by migrant smuggling networks. The United Kingdom reached agreements with representatives from France and Iraq to address irregular migration in both source and transit countries through community outreach and enhanced false document detection capabilities.

On 31 March 2025, Home Secretary Cooper announced GBP30 million in additional funding for the Border Security Command to address migrant smuggling and exploitation.⁴⁵⁵⁹ The funding will address the supply chains, illicit finances and trafficking routes utilized by migrant smuggling groups across Europe, the Western Balkans, Asia and Africa.

On 31 March 2025, Home Secretary Cooper committed GBP3 million in funding for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) to enhance prosecution of individuals suspected of organized immigration crime.⁴⁵⁶⁰ The funding will strengthen the CPS’s capacity to levy charges against migrant smuggling networks and support inter-agency collaboration between the CPS and Border Security Command to dismantle criminal organizations responsible for migrant exploitation.

On 31 March 2025, Minister for Security Dan Jarvis committed GBP1 million in funding to address organized immigration crime and migrant smuggling operations in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.⁴⁵⁶¹ The commitment will fund specialist technology, targeted training and community engagement efforts to enhance the region’s ability to investigate and prosecute migrant smuggling, trafficking and exploitation.

On 31 March 2025, Minister Eagle announced the launch of an anti-migrant trafficking awareness campaign on Vietnamese social media platforms and broadcast networks.⁴⁵⁶² The campaign, delivered through instant

⁴⁵⁵⁶ Workshop held to equip prosecutors combat corruption and money laundering, British High Commission Honiara (Honiara) 7 March 2025. Access Date: 2 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/workshop-held-to-equip-prosecutors-combat-corruption-and-money-laundering>

⁴⁵⁵⁷ Crackdown on illegal working and rogue employers in ‘gig economy’, Home Office (London) 30 March 2025. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/crackdown-on-illegal-working-and-rogue-employers-in-gig-economy>

⁴⁵⁵⁸ Landmark summit agrees new measures against organised immigration crime, Home Office (London) 31 March 2025. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-summit-agrees-new-measures-against-organised-immigration-crime>

⁴⁵⁵⁹ UK hosts first major international summit to tackle illegal migration, Home Office (London) 31 March 2025. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-hosts-first-major-international-summit-to-tackle-illegal-migration>

⁴⁵⁶⁰ UK hosts first major international summit to tackle illegal migration, Home Office (London) 31 March 2025. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-hosts-first-major-international-summit-to-tackle-illegal-migration>

⁴⁵⁶¹ New government fund to go after people smuggling gang bosses, Home Office (London) 31 March 2025. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-government-fund-to-go-after-people-smuggling-gang-bosses>

⁴⁵⁶² Zalo campaign to rebut people smugglers’ lies in Vietnam, Home Office (London) 31 March 2025. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/zalo-campaign-to-rebut-people-smugglers-lies-in-vietnam>

messaging platform Zalo and news aggregator Báo Mới, will focus on the risks of illegal migration and provide accessible information on legal routes of entry to the United Kingdom.

On 1 April 2025, Home Secretary Cooper and Vietnamese Minister for Public Security Luong Tam Quang signed a joint agreement committing the UK and Vietnam to strengthened collaborative efforts to prevent and disrupt human and migrant trafficking.⁴⁵⁶³ The agreement calls for enhanced information sharing, coordinated intergovernmental efforts to disrupt trafficking networks and the facilitation of targeted public awareness campaigns to discourage dangerous journeys among prospective migrants. Additionally, Secretary Cooper pledged GBP1 million in funding to strengthen joint anti-trafficking efforts over the next year through the Home Office Modern Slavery Fund.

On 1 April 2025, representatives of the United Kingdom, Albania, Sweden, Tunisia, the United States and Vietnam released a joint statement committing to a united response in combating organized immigration crime on digital platforms.⁴⁵⁶⁴ The statement, released at the close of the Border Security Summit in London, affirms the collective responsibility of the global community to prevent, disrupt and degrade the capacity of criminal organizations to facilitate migrant trafficking through online platforms.

On 2 April 2025, Foreign Secretary Lammy travelled to Kosovo and Serbia to strengthen regional cooperation in combating organized immigration crime.⁴⁵⁶⁵ During the visit, Secretary Lammy signed an enhanced information sharing agreement with Serbian counterparts and affirmed the United Kingdom's responsibility to disrupt and dismantle trafficking routes utilized by migrant smuggling networks in the Western Balkans.

The United Kingdom has fully complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. The UK has taken strong action to dismantle criminal organizations through arrests, disrupt their business models by targeting their supply chains, and to counter and prevent the smuggling of migrants and human trafficking through international cooperation.

Thus, the United Kingdom receives a score of +1.

Analysts: Anali Arambula Galindo and Tiya Gupta

United States: +1

The United States has fully complied with its commitment to strengthen actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 28 June 2024, the US and European Union reaffirmed their cooperation on home affairs such as migration, transnational organized crime, drug trafficking and more.⁴⁵⁶⁶ The meeting highlighted the ongoing efforts and methods being used to combat these issues such as information sharing. Moreover, the representatives

⁴⁵⁶³ UK and Vietnam sign agreement to tackle human trafficking, Home Office (London) 1 April 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-vietnam-sign-agreement-to-tackle-human-trafficking>

⁴⁵⁶⁴ The use of online platforms in enabling organised immigration crime, Home Office (London) 1 April 2025. Access Date: 6 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/statement-on-organised-immigration-crime>

⁴⁵⁶⁵ UK to tackle Western Balkan migrant transit routes and serious organised crime with closer ties in the region, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (London) 2 April 2025. Access Date: 7 April 2025. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-to-tackle-western-balkan-migrant-transit-routes-and-serious-organised-crime-with-closer-ties-in-the-region>

⁴⁵⁶⁶ Joint Press Release Following the EU-U.S Ministerial on Justice and Home Affairs, 21 June 2024, U.S Department of Homeland Security (Washington) 28 June 2024. Access Date: 21 September 2024. <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/06/28/joint-press-release-following-eu-us-ministerial-justice-and-home-affairs-21-june>

increased the discussion of irregular migration to further build on the Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling initiative.

On 11 July 2024, the Department of State announced a total of USD12 million in reward offers for information that will successfully lead to the arrests of leaders of the Tren de Aragua organization.⁴⁵⁶⁷ The Tren de Aragua is a transnational criminal organization, and its criminal network is involved in activities in Central and South America as well as the US. This initiative aims to disrupt transnational crime by offering rewards and coordinating with the Government of Colombia to apprehend fugitives.

On 18 July 2024, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) sanctioned the Abdul Karim Conteh Human Smuggling Organization (Karim HSO).⁴⁵⁶⁸ In cooperation with federal agency partners in the United States and Mexico, OFAC's sanctions aim to dismantle the Karim HSO's operations by targeting financial assets, blocking its properties in the US and restricting its access to financial institutions.

On 22 July 2024, US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) announced the expansion of operations to stop the criminal activities of Transnational Crime Organizations.⁴⁵⁶⁹ The expansion of Operation Plaza Spike will stop and prevent illegal drug trafficking, exploitation of vulnerable migrants, and violence in communities at the US-Mexico border. This increase in law enforcement coverage will help better secure the southwest border and allow the CBP to target plaza bosses and cartels to reduce criminal activity.

On 25 July 2024, OFAC sanctioned the Lopez Human Smuggling Operation (Lopez HSO).⁴⁵⁷⁰ In close partnership with US and Mexican federal partners, OFAC's sanctions seek to dismantle the Lopez HSO's operations by blocking its properties in the US and restricting its access to financial institutions.

On 22 August 2024, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Justice Department in collaboration with Guatemalan law enforcement under the Joint Task Force Alpha, executed multiple search and arrest warrants throughout Guatemala, leading to the arrest of a Guatemalan national indicted in Texas for alleged involvement in a human smuggling network.⁴⁵⁷¹ This involvement is tied to the 2022 San Antonio incident that resulted in the deaths of 53 migrants. This extensive bilateral cooperation disrupted such transnational smuggling networks that aimed to exploit migrants and undermine the security of US borders, also enhancing international cooperation.

On 26 August 2024, Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro N. Mayorkas, Colombian Minister of Foreign Affairs Luis Gilberto Murillo and Panamanian Minister of Foreign Affairs Javier Eduardo Martinez-Acha released a joint statement addressing irregular migration.⁴⁵⁷² In the statement, the United States reaffirmed its commitment to strengthening cooperation in dismantling migrant trafficking and smuggling networks.

⁴⁵⁶⁷ Up to \$12 Million in Reward Offers for Information Leading to Arrests and/or Convictions of Three Leaders of the Tren de Aragua Transnational Criminal Organization, U.S. Department of State (Washington) 11 July 2024. Access Date: 21 September 2024. <https://www.state.gov/up-to-12-million-in-reward-offers-for-information-leading-to-arrests-and-or-convictions-of-three-leaders-of-the-tren-de-aragua-transnational-criminal-organization/>

⁴⁵⁶⁸ Treasury Targets Transnational Criminal Organization Smuggling Migrants into the United States, U.S. Department of the Treasury (Washington, D.C.) 18 July 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2470>

⁴⁵⁶⁹ ICYMI: CBP Announces Expanded Operations Targeting Transnational Criminal Organizations, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (Washington) 22 July 2024. Access Date: 23 September 2024. <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/icymi-cbp-announces-expanded-operations-targeting-transnational>

⁴⁵⁷⁰ Treasury Targets Guatemalan Human Smuggling Organization for Illegal Transport of Migrants to the United States, U.S. Department of the Treasury (Washington, D.C.) 25 July 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2490>

⁴⁵⁷¹ Major Enforcement Operation in Guatemala Secures Arrest of Human Smuggler Indicted by Joint Task Force Alpha for Links to 2022 Mass Casualty Event in Texas, Homeland Security (Washington) 22 August 2024. Access Date: 28 October 2024. <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/08/22/major-enforcement-operation-guatemala-secures-arrest-human-smuggler-indicted-jtfa>

⁴⁵⁷² Joint Statement: Trilateral on Irregular Migration, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (Washington, D.C.) 26 August 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/08/26/joint-statement-trilateral-irregular-migration>

On 28 August 2024, the DHS, along with the Federal Emergency Management Agency and CBP, announced over USD380 million for Shelter and Service Programs.⁴⁵⁷³ This supports migrant-hosting communities by reducing burdens on short-term holding facilities, and humanely addressing and stabilizing migration while also effectively managing border facilities.

On 29 August 2024, the CBP and the Government of Mexico announced the continuation of their law enforcement partnership to arrest criminals wanted by both countries and to stop transnational crime.⁴⁵⁷⁴ Five new criminal targets were announced who are involved in human smuggling, drug trafficking, and other crimes.

On 5 September 2024, the Department of State announced the Aumoana Regional Law Enforcement Initiative, which will train and provide support to Pacific allies to improve law enforcement capabilities.⁴⁵⁷⁵ This initiative will help stop illegal maritime activities such as drug and migrant trafficking, and other crimes.

On 11 September 2024, Spokesperson for the Department of State Matthew Miller announced the imposition of visa restrictions on executives of a European charter flight company for offering services assisting irregular migrants seeking to enter the United States through Nicaragua under Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act.⁴⁵⁷⁶ In the statement, Mr. Miller further reaffirmed U.S. commitment against the exploitation of migrants by smugglers, private enterprises and government officials.

On 13 September 2024, the CBP announced the signing of a Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement with Uzbekistan aimed at improving cooperation on law enforcement and customs support between the two countries.⁴⁵⁷⁷ This new agreement allows both countries to exchange information, combat drug trafficking, and halt the operations of transnational criminal organizations together.

On 24 September 2024, Mr. Miller announced the imposition of visa restrictions on executives of designated travel agencies based in Europe, Africa and the Middle East known to offer travel services assisting irregular migrants seeking to enter the United States.⁴⁵⁷⁸ These restrictions are in accordance with Section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act, which aims to reduce irregular migration by targeting individuals facilitating exploitative travel services to migrants.

On 25 September 2024, Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced over USD686 million in “new humanitarian, development, economic and security assistance to support partner countries.”⁴⁵⁷⁹ This allows for

⁴⁵⁷³ Department of Homeland Security Announces \$380 Million in Additional Funding to Communities Receiving Migrants, Homeland Security (Washington) 28 August 2024. Access Date: 01 November 2024.

<https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/08/28/departments-homeland-security-announces-380-million-additional-funding-communities>

⁴⁵⁷⁴ U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Government of Mexico counterparts in Chihuahua continue law enforcement partnership on Se Busca Informacion initiative to find wanted criminals, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (Washington) 29 August 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/local-media-release/us-customs-and-border-protection-government-mexico-counterparts>

⁴⁵⁷⁵ Aumoana Regional Law Enforcement Initiative Announced in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, U.S. Department of State (Washington) 5 September 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.state.gov/aumoana-regional-law-enforcement-initiative-announced-in-nukualofa-tonga/>

⁴⁵⁷⁶ Visa Restrictions on Senior Officials of a Charter Flight Company Facilitating Irregular Migration to the United States, U.S. Department of State (Washington, D.C.) 11 September 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.state.gov/visa-restrictions-on-senior-officials-of-a-charter-flight-company-facilitating-irregular-migration-to-the-united-states/>

⁴⁵⁷⁷ US, Uzbekistan sign Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (Washington) 13 September 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/national-media-release/us-uzbekistan-sign-customs-mutual-assistance-agreement>

⁴⁵⁷⁸ Actions Against Travel Agency Executives Who Knowingly Facilitate Irregular Migration, U.S. Department of State (Washington, D.C.) 24 September 2024. Access Date: 3 November 2024. <https://www.state.gov/actions-against-travel-agency-executives-who-knowingly-facilitate-irregular-migration/>

⁴⁵⁷⁹ Fact sheet: Fourth Ministerial Meeting on the Los Angeles Declaration on Migration and Protection, The White House (Washington) 26 September 2024. Access Date: 29 October 2024. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/09/26/fact-sheet-fourth-ministerial-meeting-on-the-los-angeles-declaration-on-migration-and-protection/>

resource mobilization to increase the prosecutions of human smuggling and trafficking networks, impose greater restrictions on irregular migration and expand lawful pathways for migration and border protection.

On 4 October 2024, G7 Interior and Security Ministers announced the G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants.⁴⁵⁸⁰ The priorities of the plan are to improve collaboration and communication between partner countries, strengthen border management, and discourage migrants by informing them of the risks.

On 11 October 2024, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe announced the completion of an anti-human trafficking exercise based in Italy.⁴⁵⁸¹ The governments of Italy, the United States, France and Germany contributed funds and equipment for the exercise.

On 22 October 2024, the DHS, with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), deported Indian nationals who lacked legal grounds to stay in the US through a charter flight.⁴⁵⁸² In collaboration with the Indian government, this action combats irregular migration.

On 18 November 2024, the DHS, along with ICE, deported Chinese nationals who were not permitted to lawfully remain in the US on a charter flight.⁴⁵⁸³ This will decrease and prevent irregular migration, thereby countering the smuggling and exploitation of individuals.

On 19 November 2024, OFAC announced the sanctioning of a network of nine Mexican nationals linked to drug and human smuggling operations of the Jalisco New Generation Cartel.⁴⁵⁸⁴ OFAC's sanctions seek to combat transnational crimes by targeting financial assets and properties sanctioned individuals own.

On 26 November 2024, OFAC announced the sanctioning of five Mexican nationals linked to the Gulf Cartel.⁴⁵⁸⁵ OFAC's sanctions aim to tackle illegal fishing as well as drug and human smuggling operations of the Gulf Cartel by restricting transactions of properties owned by sanctioned individuals.

On 26 November 2024, G7 Foreign Ministers reaffirmed their commitment made at the Apulia Summit to address irregular migration and its causes, including poverty, instability, and climate change.⁴⁵⁸⁶

On 9 December 2024, the Department of Justice (DOJ) in a joint operation with Guatemalan authorities arrested five Guatemalan nationals for alleged involvement in a transnational migrant smuggling network.⁴⁵⁸⁷ This operation is part of Joint Task Force Alpha's investigation into a mass casualty incident in Chiapas, Mexico in 2021 that resulted in the deaths of over 50 migrants, including minors. The operation is part of the DOJ's international collaborative effort to combat migrant smuggling and trafficking in Mexico and Central America.

⁴⁵⁸⁰ Annex A: G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants, G7 Information Centre (Mirabella Eclano) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/justice/2024-interior-action-plan.html>

⁴⁵⁸¹ Anti-trafficking practitioners meet in Italy for first Mediterranean regional simulation-based training exercise, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (Vienna) 11 October 2024. Access Date: 1 June 2025. <https://www.osce.org/cthb/578104>

⁴⁵⁸² DHS Conducts Removal Flight to the Republic of India, Department of Homeland Security (Washington) 25 October 2024. Access Date: 20 November 2024. <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/10/25/dhs-conducts-removal-flight-republic-india>

⁴⁵⁸³ DHS Conducts Removal Flight to the People's Republic of China, Homeland Security (Washington) 18 November 2024. Access Date: 28 November 2024. <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/11/18/dhs-conducts-removal-flight-peoples-republic-china>

⁴⁵⁸⁴ Treasury Targets Fentanyl Traffickers and Other Key Contributors to U.S. Opioid Crisis, US Department of the Treasury (Washington, D.C.) 19 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2719>

⁴⁵⁸⁵ Treasury Targets Cartel-Enabled Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing Operations, US Department of the Treasury (Washington, D.C.) 24 November 2024. Access Date: 1 December 2024. <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy2729>

⁴⁵⁸⁶ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting Statement G7 Information Centre (Fiuggi – Anagni) 26 November 2024. Access Date: 11 December 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/foreign/241126-statement.html>

⁴⁵⁸⁷ Five Guatemalan human smugglers charged in U.S. for 2021 mass casualty event in Chiapas, Mexico, United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas (Houston) 9 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdtx/pr/five-guatemalan-human-smugglers-charged-us-2021-mass-casualty-event-chiapas-mexico>

On 17 December 2024, the DOJ announced US authorities' arrest of two Colombian nationals, in coordination with Colombian authorities, for their alleged involvement in a transnational human smuggling operation.⁴⁵⁸⁸ This operation is part of Joint Task Force Alpha's investigation into an incident involving the disappearance of 40 migrants on a boat en route to Nicaragua. This indictment is part of the DOJ's continued commitment to international partnership in disrupting and dismantling transnational human smuggling networks.

On 20 January 2025, President Trump issued an executive order on the participation of the United States Armed Forces in protecting the US borders and combating illegal activities.⁴⁵⁸⁹ The executive order assigns the United States Northern Command the mission to secure the borders and counter human smuggling and trafficking operations, illegal immigration, drug trafficking and other unlawful activities.

On 18 March 2025, OFAC sanctioned Jumilca Sandivel Hernandez Perez, a senior figure in the Lopez Human Smuggling Organization (Lopez HSO).⁴⁵⁹⁰ OFAC's sanctions aim to disrupt the financial operations of the Lopez HSO by restricting property ownership and access to financial institutions in the US.

The United States has fully complied with its commitment to strengthen its actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. The United States has taken strong action in dismantling transnational criminal organizations, including enhancing foreign cooperation, and has disrupted their business models by imposing sanction measures such as asset confiscation. The United States has also acted cooperatively to prevent and counter migrant smuggling and human trafficking more broadly.

Thus, the United States receives a score of +1.

Analyst: Ryan Do

European Union: +1

The European Union has fully complied with its commitment to strengthen its actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models.

On 13 June 2024, the European Union adopted the revised EU Anti-Trafficking Directive, giving EU member states two years to transpose these new rules into their national law.⁴⁵⁹¹ Actions under this new directive include expanding training and technological capabilities to identify trafficking, improving coordination between formal referral mechanisms and asylum authorities, and formalizing EU wide data collection on trafficking in human beings.

On 19 June 2024, the European Council announced the expanded role of Europol in fighting migrant smuggling in member states.⁴⁵⁹² Changes to the Europol regulations will increase information sharing, use of

⁴⁵⁸⁸ Two Colombian Human Smugglers Arrested on U.S. Charges, United States Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas (Houston) 17 December 2024. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.justice.gov/archives/opa/pr/two-colombian-human-smugglers-arrested-us-charges>

⁴⁵⁸⁹ CLARIFYING THE MILITARY'S ROLE IN PROTECTING THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF THE UNITED STATES, The White House (Washington D.C.) 20 January 2025. Access Date: 19 February 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/clarifying-the-militarys-role-in-protecting-the-territorial-integrity-of-the-united-states/>

⁴⁵⁹⁰ Treasury Targets Mexico-Based Leader of Transnational Criminal Organization Responsible for Smuggling Thousands of Migrants Across the U.S. Southern Border, US Department of the Treasury (Washington D.C.) 18 March 2025. Access Date: 8 April 2025. <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sb0051>

⁴⁵⁹¹ Legal and Policy Framework, European Commission (Brussels) 10 July 2024. Access Date: 3 October 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/policies/internal-security/organised-crime-and-human-trafficking/together-against-trafficking-human-beings/legal-and-policy-framework_en

⁴⁵⁹² Migrant smuggling: Enhanced role of Europol in fighting migrant smuggling, Council of the EU (Brussels) 19 June 2024. Access Date: 25 September 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/06/19/migrant-smuggling-enhanced-role-of-europol-in-fighting-migrant-smuggling/>

biometric data, and assist national law enforcement bodies to reduce transnational crime and terrorism. This will strengthen European border security as well, with closer collaboration between Europol and EU's border agency Frontex.

On 20 June 2024, the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs announced the success of the meeting of the EU Network of National Coordinators and Rapporteurs on trafficking in human beings.⁴⁵⁹³ The meeting highlighted the importance of cross-border and EU agency collaboration to combat human trafficking.

On 21 June 2024, the European Council announced the success of the EU-US Ministerial meetings where both sides confirmed their support and need to address irregular migration.⁴⁵⁹⁴ The parties focused on addressing migrant smuggling and trafficking.

On 24 June 2024, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex announced the success of the coordinated operations with Romania, Austria, Europol and INTERPOL in cracking down on criminal networks engaged in human trafficking.⁴⁵⁹⁵ These successful operations are fundamental in securing EU borders and disrupting cross-border crime. In a period of 7 days, authorities arrested 219 smugglers and rescued 1374 victims.

On 25 June 2024, the EU Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs announced the discussion for the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum at the European Migration Conference.⁴⁵⁹⁶ The implementation of the Pact will set a common approach to managing immigration for the EU. It serves as a roadmap which will push EU countries to create their own implementation plans and provides stakeholders with a to-do list of top priorities.

On 26 June 2024, the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs announced key details of the "Priorities of the Home affairs funds" conference where representatives outlined the European Commission's funding and policy plans for coming years.⁴⁵⁹⁷ With the home affairs funds being nearly doubled recently, the conference provided an opportunity to signal successful techniques and proper fund management for projects supporting migration, border management, and organized crime.

On 27 June 2024, President of the European Council Charles Michel highlighted the serious challenge of migration during his remarks following the European Council meeting.⁴⁵⁹⁸ He highlighted the immense progress undertaken with the migration pact but drew attention to the need for more cooperation with third countries to address migration.

⁴⁵⁹³ National Coordinators and Rapporteurs discussed trafficking for labour exploitation and forced criminality, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 20 June 2024. Access Date: 25 September 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/national-coordinators-and-rapporteurs-discussed-trafficking-labour-exploitation-and-forced-2024-06-20_en

⁴⁵⁹⁴ Joint press release following the EU-U.S Ministerial on Justice and Home Affairs 21 June 2024 (Brussels), Council of the EU (Brussels) 21 June 2024. Access Date: 25 September 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/06/21/joint-press-release-following-the-eu-us-ministerial-meeting-on-justice-and-home-affairs-21-june-2024-brussels/>

⁴⁵⁹⁵ Frontex teams up to combat human trafficking, Frontex European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Warsaw) 24 June 2024. Access Date: 25 September 2024. <https://www.frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/frontex-teams-up-to-combat-human-trafficking-Y4Mt2H>

⁴⁵⁹⁶ European Migration Conference on the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 25 June 2024. Access Date: 25 September 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/european-migration-conference-implementation-pact-migration-and-asylum-2024-06-25_en

⁴⁵⁹⁷ European Commission helps EU-funded projects in migration, security, and borders strive for excellence, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 26 June 2024. Access Date: 26 September 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/european-commission-helps-eu-funded-projects-migration-security-and-borders-strive-excellence-2024-06-26_en

⁴⁵⁹⁸ Remarks by President Charles Michel following the European Council meeting of 27 June 2024, Council of the EU (Brussels) 28 June 2024. Access Date: 26 September 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/06/28/remarks-by-president-charles-michel-following-the-european-council-meeting-of-27-june-2024/>

On 1 July 2024, the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs announced the details of the meeting of the Focus Group of specialized prosecutors combating trafficking in human beings.⁴⁵⁹⁹ The meeting convened EU and non-EU prosecutors to share experiences on the challenges and best practices for the prosecution of human trafficking cases.

On 5 July 2024, Eurojust announced coordinated efforts from Romanian and French law enforcement agencies to dismantle a human trafficking network.⁴⁶⁰⁰ This transnational crime group operated in both France and Romania where authorities were able to apprehend the criminals with the support of Eurojust and Europol.

On 10 July 2024, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation announced the signing of a new agreement with the prosecution services of Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, and Peru to fight against organized crime.⁴⁶⁰¹ This increased collaboration between countries will work to disrupt transnational criminal activities, stop drug trafficking, and terrorism.

On 12 July 2024, the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs announced the implementation of stronger EU rules to combat human trafficking with the revision of the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive.⁴⁶⁰² These new changes make it easier for authorities to investigate and prosecute criminals and add a wider array of items that count as trafficking. Also, the changes will provide better assistance and support to victims of human trafficking.

On 17 July 2024, Europol's European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) released a new report that investigates the latest developments and main threats in migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings based on the most recent operations supported by Europol.⁴⁶⁰³ The results of the report will inform EU attempts to better counter migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings going forward.

On 30 July 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the arrest of eight individuals involved in migrant smuggling in an operation with the Romanian Police and Border Police.⁴⁶⁰⁴ The operation benefited from cross-border cooperation between agencies that led to the successful dismantling of the organized criminal network that was smuggling Syria and Romanian nationals.

⁴⁵⁹⁹ Specialised anti-trafficking prosecutors meet for the third time to reinforce judicial cooperation, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 1 July 2024. Access Date: 26 September 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/specialised-anti-trafficking-prosecutors-meet-third-time-reinforce-judicial-cooperation-2024-07-01_en

⁴⁶⁰⁰ Coordinated actions from Romanian and French authorities to stop a human trafficking network, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 5 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/actions-taken-stop-romanian-human-trafficking-network>

⁴⁶⁰¹ An important step against organised crime: Eurojust signs Working Arrangements with five Latin American countries, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 10 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/important-step-against-organised-crime-eurojust-signs-working-arrangements-five-latin-american>

⁴⁶⁰² Stronger EU rules to fight trafficking in human beings enter into force, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 12 July 2024. Access Date: 27 September 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/stronger-eu-rules-fight-trafficking-human-beings-enter-force-2024-07-12_en

⁴⁶⁰³ Tackling Threats, Addressing Challenges - Europol's Response to Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking in Human Beings In 2023 and Onwards, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Luxembourg) July 2024. Access Date: 3 October 2024. https://www.europol.europa.eu/cms/sites/default/files/documents/Tackling_threats__addressing_challenges_-_Europol's_response_to_migrant_smuggling_and_trafficking_in_human_beings_in_2023_and_onwards.pdf

⁴⁶⁰⁴ 8 arrested in Romania for smuggling migrants along Balkan route, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (The Hague) 30 July 2024. Access Date: 28 September 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/8-arrested-in-romania-for-smuggling-migrants-along-balkan-route>

On 31 July 2024, the EU Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs announced the acceptance of Ireland's opt-in to participate in seven legislative instruments within the Pact on Migration and Asylum.⁴⁶⁰⁵ This makes Ireland a participant in a joint European approach to managing migration in the EU through cooperation on policies on migration, asylum and integration. Ireland will receive operational and technical support from the European Commission and EU Agencies to support contributions to the common implementation plan.

On 1 August 2024, the EU Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs announced key details on the EU Technical Support Instrument that will provide tailored guidance on asylum procedures, internal and external migration management, resettlement, and the use of EU funds for nine EU Member States to support the implementation of the Pact on Migration and Asylum.⁴⁶⁰⁶ The support instrument will assist in the operationalization of a common implementation plan for managing migration in the EU.

On 2 August 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the arrest of 21 individuals suspected of smuggling Algerian and Syrian nationals into the EU in an operation by the Spanish National Police with support from Europol.⁴⁶⁰⁷ The operation dismantled a transnational organized crime network spanning the EU through collaboration between agencies, disrupting the migrant smuggling route from Algeria to Spain.

On 6 August 2024, the EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya (EUBAM) announced details on the second meeting of the Joint Committee with Libyan counterparts.⁴⁶⁰⁸ Parties focused on the reinforcement of commitments with the EUBAM partnership to improve border management and expand the capabilities of Libyan authorities to counter cross-border crime.

On 21 August 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the arrest of eight suspected gang members involved in migrant smuggling by Bulgarian authorities supported by Europol.⁴⁶⁰⁹ Four of the suspects were High Value Targets. The operation benefitted from the transnational collaboration between Bulgaria, Moldova, and Romania to raid suspected locations and dismantle a part of the organized criminal network smuggling migrants from Turkey into Bulgaria through the Western Balkan route.

On 3 September 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the detainment of 19 migrant smugglers in an operation with by law enforcement, supported by Europol.⁴⁶¹⁰ The operation was the result of cooperation on the investigation by Hungarian, Italian, Romanian, and Slovenian law enforcement authorities.

⁴⁶⁰⁵ Ireland will participate in the EU Pact on Migration and Asylum, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 31 July 2024. Access Date: 13 October 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/ireland-will-participate-eu-pact-migration-and-asylum-2024-07-31_en

⁴⁶⁰⁶ Nine EU countries receive technical support for the implementation of the Pact, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 1 August 2024. Access Date: 10 October 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/nine-eu-countries-receive-technical-support-implementation-pact-2024-08-01_en

⁴⁶⁰⁷ 21 arrested in Spain for smuggling Algerian and Syrian migrants into the EU, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Madrid) 2 August 2024. Access Date: 17 October 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/21-arrested-in-spain-for-smuggling-algerian-and-syrian-migrants-eu>

⁴⁶⁰⁸ 2nd MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE REINFORCES EUBAM PARTNERSHIP WITH LIBYAN COUNTERPARTS, EU Border Assistance Mission in Libya (Tripoli) 6 August 2024. Access Date: 10 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eubam-libya/2nd-meeting-joint-committee-reinforces-eubam-partnership-libyan-counterparts-tripoli-6-august-2024_en

⁴⁶⁰⁹ Four High Value Targets leading migrant smuggling ring arrested in Bulgaria, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Sofia) 21 August 2024. Access Date: 17 October 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/four-high-value-targets-leading-migrant-smuggling-ring-arrested-in-bulgaria>

⁴⁶¹⁰ 19 migrant smugglers detained in Romania, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Rome) 3 September 2024. Access Date: 17 October 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/19-migrant-smugglers-detained-in-romania>

On 9 September 2024, the EuroMed Justice Project, in cooperation with INTERPOL and the Malta General Police, held a five-day capacity training on human trafficking and migrant smuggling investigations.⁴⁶¹¹ The training included lessons on identifying new criminal patterns, leading investigations in the absence of victim cooperation, and successful prosecution of traffickers and smugglers within a human rights framework.

On 10 September 2024, the European Commissioner for Home Affairs and the Egyptian Minister of Foreign Affairs announced details of a meeting discussing the cooperation between the EU and Egypt on migration.⁴⁶¹² The meeting highlighted the success of Egypt in managing irregular migration and the importance of cooperation to establish a holistic and bilateral approach to border management and the return of migrants.

On 20 September 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the arrest of eight migrant smugglers in an operation with Bulgarian, Greek, and Romanian authorities within the framework of the regional Operational Task Force.⁴⁶¹³ The dismantling of the criminal network smuggling Turkish nationals through Bulgaria and Serbia into south-western Europe benefitted from the joint cross-border actions of agencies facilitated by Europol.

On 25 September 2024, the EU's Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation announced the launch of the European Judicial Organised Crime Network to enhance transnational judicial cooperation, involving special prosecutors from all EU Member States.⁴⁶¹⁴ This will address multifaceted criminal operations and uncover weaknesses in the system, improving the ability of EU Member States to prosecute criminal groups involved in migrants smuggling and human trafficking.

On 30 September 2024, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency Frontex published a long-term strategic risk assessment that addresses the evolving criminal networks affecting border security such as migrant smuggling and the trafficking of persons.⁴⁶¹⁵ The assessment raises awareness of future problem areas in the process of deterring migrant smuggling.

On 3 October 2024, the Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh announced details of a EUR12 million regional project to build human and institutional capacity for border management in the region, in partnership with the ICMPD, by providing training and supporting detection services that prevent irregular migration.⁴⁶¹⁶ This will improve efforts to counter transnational organized crime in the region, such as human trafficking, and prevent irregular departures.

⁴⁶¹¹ EuroMed Justice Project joins partners to strengthen regional efforts to combat human trafficking and migrant smuggling, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 13 September 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/euromed-justice-project-joins-partners-strengthen-regional-efforts-combat-human-trafficking>

⁴⁶¹² Joint Press Statement on the occasion of the official visit of Commissioner for Home Affairs Ylva Johansson to Egypt, Delegation of the European Union to Egypt (Cairo) 10 September 2024. Access Date: 13 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/egypt/joint-press-statement-occasion-official-visit-commissioner-home-affairs-ylva-johansson-egypt_en

⁴⁶¹³ 8 arrested for smuggling migrants across the Turkish-Bulgarian border, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Sofia) 20 September 2024. Access Date: 17 October 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/8-arrested-for-smuggling-migrants-across-turkish-bulgarian-border>

⁴⁶¹⁴ European prosecutors join forces to systematically fight organised criminal groups in new network, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 25 September 2024. Access Date: 17 October 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/european-prosecutors-join-forces-systemically-fight-organised-criminal-groups-new-network>

⁴⁶¹⁵ Frontex Releases Strategic Risk Analysis 2024, Frontex (Warsaw) 30 September 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.frontex.europa.eu/media-centre/news/news-release/frontex-releases-strategic-risk-analysis-2024-Zjqtoj>

⁴⁶¹⁶ The European Union supports Bangladesh Integrated Border Management with Equipment to Strengthen Border Security, Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh (Dhaka) 3 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/bangladesh/european-union-supports-bangladesh-integrated-border-management-equipment-strengthen-border-security_en

On 4 October 2024, the G7 Interior and Security Ministers' Meeting committed to an action plan comprised of five dimensions, which aim at bolstering law enforcement and cooperation largely.⁴⁶¹⁷

On 14 October 2024, the Delegation of the European Union to the International Organisations in Vienna announced key information on the discussion at the 12th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.⁴⁶¹⁸ Discussion included topics on smuggling of migrants and human trafficking, reiterating the EU's commitment to continuing to work with partners to improve cross-border law enforcement, particularly with third countries.

On 17 October 2024, President Michel announced the success of the meeting of the European Council, reaffirming the determination of EU members to improve the control of EU borders and combat organized crime and human trafficking.⁴⁶¹⁹ President Michel noted convergent interests on border management and security amongst EU members.

On 18 October 2024, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Eurojust) released a publication that aims to raise awareness on the relation between international surrogacy arrangements and human trafficking.⁴⁶²⁰ The document outlines possible solutions to the main legal challenges faced by national authorities.

On 19 October 2024, Ambassador Vesna Kos attended the European Parliamentary Association Event on EU-Council of Europe Cooperation.⁴⁶²¹ She called for greater collaboration between the Council of Europe and the EU on various issues, including migrant smuggling.

On 21 October 2024, the Diplomatic Service of the European Union announced the details of the fourth annual Strategic Consultation meeting between the EU and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights.⁴⁶²² The meeting highlighted the intent for continued discussions on human rights and migration issues.

On 24 October 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the arrest of 16 migrant smugglers in an operation with law enforcement authorities in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.⁴⁶²³ The operation benefited from transnational analytical, operational, and financial support

⁴⁶¹⁷ ANNEX A: G7 Action Plan to Prevent and Counter the Smuggling of Migrants, G7 Information Centre (Mirabella Eclano) 4 October 2024. Access Date: 10 November 2024. <https://www.g7.utoronto.ca/justice/2024-interior-action-plan.html>

⁴⁶¹⁸ EU Statement delivered at the opening of the Twelfth Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), Delegation of the European Union to the International Organisations in Vienna (Vienna) 14 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/vienna-international-organisations/eu-statement-delivered-opening-twelfth-session-conference-parties-united-nations-convention-against_en

⁴⁶¹⁹ Remarks by President Charles Michel at the press conference following the European Council meeting of 17 October 2024, European Council (Brussels) 17 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/10/17/remarks-by-president-charles-michel-at-the-press-conference-following-the-european-council-meeting-of-17-october-2024/>

⁴⁶²⁰ Surrogacy and Human Trafficking, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 18 October 2024. Access Date: 21 October 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/publication/surrogacy-and-human-trafficking>

⁴⁶²¹ EU Ambassador Participates in the European Parliamentary Association Event on EU-Council of Europe Cooperation, Delegation of the European Union to the Council of Europe (Strasbourg) 26 September 2024. Access Date: 14 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/council-europe/eu-ambassador-participates-european-parliamentary-association-event-eu-council-europe-cooperation_en

⁴⁶²² Human Rights: EU and OHCHR held fourth annual Strategic Consultations, The Diplomatic Service of the European Union (Geneva) 21 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/human-rights-eu-and-ohchr-held-fourth-annual-strategic-consultations_en

⁴⁶²³ 16 arrests as police target migrant smuggling across the Sava River, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Zagreb) 24 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/16-arrests-police-target-migrant-smuggling-across-sava-river>

between agencies to take down parts of a criminal network smuggling Bosnian nationals to Croatia across the Sava River.

On 28 October 2024, the European Commission and the Ministry of Interior of North Macedonia signed an Administrative Arrangement to make North Macedonia an Observer Country in the European Migration Network and commit to collaborating in the network by exchanging current information on asylum and migration in North Macedonia.⁴⁶²⁴ This will reinforce regional cooperation and allow for informed policymaking within EU institutions on migration, asylum, and border management.

On 28 October 2024, the European Commissioner for Justice and the Minister of Justice of Bosnia and Herzegovina signed a cooperation agreement with the EU's agency for criminal justice cooperation, Eurojust, to increase coordination with EU judicial bodies.⁴⁶²⁵ This will increase the efficiency of cross-border investigations and prosecutions on transnational organized crime and human trafficking, as well as the capacity for Bosnia and Herzegovina to participate in investigations. It signals the integration of Bosnia and Herzegovina into the EU's framework of standards for judicial cooperation.

On 29 October 2024, the European Council announced the success of the meeting of the EU-Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs where commitments on joint efforts to counter transnational organized crime, illicit trafficking of migrants, and improving border management were reaffirmed.⁴⁶²⁶ The meeting highlighted the importance of cross-border criminal justice cooperation to combat human trafficking and regional cooperation on border security.

On 4 November 2024, Eurojust published a Multi-Annual Strategy report listing the objectives of active implementation of the revised Action Plan Against Migrant Smuggling and the revised Strategy in Combating Trafficking in Human Beings.⁴⁶²⁷ The report informs future efforts to counter migrant smuggling and trafficking of human beings.

On 5 November 2024, the Council of the European Union announced the adoption of an EU law that will regulate the conditions for criminal case proceedings to be transferred between member states.⁴⁶²⁸ This will improve the ability of EU member states to combat cross-border crime, such as migrant smuggling and human trafficking.

On 6 November 2024, Eurojust released the outcome report from the focus group of specialized prosecutors against human trafficking.⁴⁶²⁹ The EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator implemented this focus group as part of

⁴⁶²⁴ North Macedonia becomes observer country to the European Migration Network, European Commission (Budva) 28 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/north-macedonia-becomes-observer-country-european-migration-network-2024-10-28_en

⁴⁶²⁵ BiH signs Eurojust agreement on judicial cooperation with the EU, Delegation of the European Union to Bosnia and Herzegovina & European Union Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Budva) 28 October 2024. Access Date: 31 October 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/bosnia-and-herzegovina/bih-signs-eurojust-agreement-judicial-cooperation-eu_en

⁴⁶²⁶ Joint press statement EU-Western Balkans Ministerial Forum on Justice and Home Affairs, Council of the European Union (Budva) 29 October 2024. Access Date: 30 October 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/10/29/joint-press-statement-eu-western-balkans-ministerial-forum-on-justice-and-home-affairs-budva-montenegro-28-29-october-2024/>

⁴⁶²⁷ Multi-Annual Strategy 2025-2027, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 4 November 2024. Access Date: 26 November 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/publication/multi-annual-strategy-2025-2027>

⁴⁶²⁸ Fighting cross-border crime: Council adopts EU law about transfer proceedings, Council of the EU (Brussels) 5 November 2024. Access Date: 24 November 2024. <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2024/11/05/fighting-cross-border-crime-council-adopts-eu-law-about-transfer-of-proceedings/>

⁴⁶²⁹ Focus Group of specialized prosecutors against human trafficking: Outcome Report of the 3rd meeting, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 6 November 2024. Access Date: 26 November 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/publication/focus-group-specialised-prosecutors-against-human-trafficking-outcome-report-3rd>

the EU strategy against the trafficking of human beings and works to strengthen judicial cooperation in transnational human trafficking.

On 14 November 2024, the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Kazakhstan announced key information on the discussion at the roundtable on transnational threats affecting the EU and Kazakhstan, exchanging strategies to strengthen border security and combat human trafficking.⁴⁶³⁰ This was a major step in enhancing EU-Kazakhstan cooperation and collaboration to manage illegal migration and transnational organized crime.

On 14 November 2024, the European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation announced the arrest of a major supplier of small boats to migrant smugglers in a joint investigation facilitated by Eurojust and Europol between Belgian, UK, and Dutch authorities.⁴⁶³¹ The investigation benefited from the cross-border cooperation between agencies, as part of an effort to combat migrant smuggling in the English Channel.

On 21 November 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the arrest of 25 migrant smugglers in a joint investigation by Germany, Austria, Bosnia, Herzegovina, the Netherlands, Poland, Serbia, the UK, and other European states, within the framework of a Europol Operational Task Force.⁴⁶³² The dismantling of the criminal network spanning 20 countries into the EU benefitted from the cross-border collaboration between countries and the Joint Investigation Team facilitated by Europol to organize judicial cooperation.

On 28 November 2024, the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation announced the arrest of 26 migrant smugglers and the seizure of EUR11 million in assets in an investigation by France supported by Luxembourg, Portugal, the UK, and other EU and non-EU states, in the Indian subcontinent.⁴⁶³³ The dismantling of the migrant smuggling criminal network spanning the Indian subcontinent, the UK, and North America benefitted from the cross-border cooperation facilitated by Europol.

On 17 December 2024, Europol, the Spanish National Police and the Croatian National Police arrested 30 traffickers linked to a Chinese human trafficking ring operating in Spain and Croatia.⁴⁶³⁴ These arrests aim to dismantle the criminal network supporting human trafficking in Spain and Croatia.

On 15 January 2025, Europol, the German Criminal Inspectorate and the Hungarian Bureau of Investigation THB Unit collaborated to dismantle a criminal network that was involved in sexually exploitative human trafficking.⁴⁶³⁵ The network had been targeting young women in Hungary for exploitation.

⁴⁶³⁰ Astana Hosted a Roundtable on Transnational Threats Affecting the EU and Kazakhstan, Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Kazakhstan (Astana) 15 November 2024. Access Date: 24 November 2024. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/kazakhstan/astana-hosted-roundtable-transnational-threats-affecting-eu-and-kazakhstan_en

⁴⁶³¹ Supplier of small boats to human smugglers arrested, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (Amsterdam) 14 November 2024. Access Date: 24 November 2024. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/supplier-small-boats-human-smugglers-arrested>

⁴⁶³² 25 arrests in EU-wide operation against Syrian migrant smuggling network, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Berlin) 21 November 2024. Access Date: 29 November 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/25-arrests-in-eu-wide-operation-against-syrian-migrant-smuggling-network>

⁴⁶³³ France arrests 26 for smuggling migrants from Indian sub-continent, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Paris) 28 November 2024. Access Date: 29 November 2024. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/france-arrests-26-for-smuggling-migrants-indian-sub-continent>

⁴⁶³⁴ 30 arrested in crackdown on Chinese human trafficking ring in Spain and Croatia, Europol (The Hague) 17 December 2024. Access Date: 16 February 2025. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/30-arrested-in-crackdown-chinese-human-trafficking-ring-in-spain-and-croatia>

⁴⁶³⁵ Violent human traffickers halted in Germany and Hungary, Europol (The Hague) 15 January 2025. Access Date: 16 February 2025. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/violent-human-traffickers-halted-in-germany-and-hungary>

On 20 January 2025, the European Commission published its fifth report documenting progress in combating human trafficking.⁴⁶³⁶ The report highlighted a 3% decline in child victims while also noting a 20.5% increase in the number of registered victims. This report aims to inform future efforts to prevent and counter human trafficking.

On 16 March 2023, Europol, supported by the French National Police and the Spanish National Police, dismantled an organized criminal network that had been smuggling migrants from Spain to France.⁴⁶³⁷ This criminal network has smuggled approximately 1,700 migrants throughout more than 500 operations.

On 18 March 2025, Eurojust held the 5th EuroMed Justice Network meeting.⁴⁶³⁸ Twenty-nine criminal justice representatives from six partner countries and eleven European Union Member States attended this meeting, which was centered around an exchange of knowledge and international judicial cooperation regarding the trafficking of human beings.

On 18 March 2025, Europol published the report titled “EU Serious and Organised Crime Threat Assessment (EU-SOCTA) 2025.”⁴⁶³⁹ The report addresses migrant smuggling as one of the fastest growing threats in advanced criminal networks.

On 19 March 2025, Europol and Eurojust supported Belgian and German authorities to arrest members of a criminal network that was facilitating the smuggling of migrants across the English Channel.⁴⁶⁴⁰ This operation also seized equipment used to smuggle migrants to the United Kingdom, disrupting criminal networks’ business models by seizing criminal assets.

On 31 March 2025, Eurojust published a report on the 8th annual meeting on migrant smuggling, detailing operational challenges and the meeting outcomes.⁴⁶⁴¹ This report focused on emerging trends within criminal networks and advancements in casework regarding migrant smuggling.

The European Union has fully complied with its commitment to strengthen its actions to prevent, counter, and dismantle organized criminal networks that profit from the smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons and disrupt their business models. The European Union has taken strong action to address threats of migrant smuggling and human trafficking, as well as making progress in the implementation of anti-trafficking legislation.

Thus, the European Union receives a score of +1.

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⁴⁶³⁶ New Progress report on combatting Trafficking in Human Beings, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs (Brussels) 20 January 2025. Access Date: 16 February 2025. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/new-progress-report-combatting-trafficking-human-beings-2025-01-20_en

⁴⁶³⁷ Network smuggling migrants between Spain and France busted in Marseille, European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Paris) 16 March 2025. Access Date: 4 April 2025. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/france-arrests-26-for-smuggling-migrants-indian-sub-continent>

⁴⁶³⁸ Trafficking of Human Beings and Migrant Smuggling in focus at the 5th EMJNet Meeting, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 18 March 2025. Access Date: 4 April 2025. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/news/trafficking-human-beings-and-migrant-smuggling-focus-5th-emjnet-meeting>

⁴⁶³⁹ The DNA of organised crime is changing – and so is the threat to Europe, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 18 March 2025. Access Date: 4 April 2025. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/dna-of-organised-crime-changing-and-so-threat-to-europe>

⁴⁶⁴⁰ 7 arrested for facilitating migrant smuggling across the English Channel, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 19 March 2025. Access Date: 4 April 2025. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/7-arrested-for-facilitating-migrant-smuggling-across-english-channel>

⁴⁶⁴¹ Eurojust Meeting on Migrant Smuggling, European Union Agency for Criminal Justice Cooperation (The Hague) 31 March 2025. Access Date: 5 April 2025. <https://www.eurojust.europa.eu/publication/eurojust-meeting-migrant-smuggling-2024>