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ANNEX 6

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**COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE EUROPEAN  
PARLIAMENT, THE EUROPEAN COUNCIL AND THE COUNCIL**

**Progress report on the Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration**

## **ANNEX 6 - The main elements for developing the European Integrated Border Management Strategy**

The European Integrated Border Management Strategy should be developed to better reflect that the EU external borders are common borders requiring collective and joined-up actions by competent national authorities and EU authorities and by the Union as a whole.

European Integrated Border Management serves to reinforce the protection of the common external border, by taking due account of the specific situation of the Member States, in particular geographical location. **The principles of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibilities** between Member States as set out in the Treaty of Lisbon<sup>1</sup> should be fully integrated into its development. No Member State should be left alone when it is in need of support. At the same time, Member States should make full use of all available means and tools at EU and national level and this should be done in a fully integrated manner to address any fragmentation and loopholes and guarantee a continuum of actions from border control to return. These are essential elements for preserving and reinforcing the **mutual trust among all Schengen countries**.

### **The fundamental principles underlying European Integrated Border Management**

The essence of an Integrated Border Management is that it is integrated: at all levels, in all forms of border management cooperation and sharing of information.

European Integrated Border Management should therefore be implemented through **inter-agency cooperation** at European and national level to guarantee a comprehensive, cross-sectoral and cost effective approach. This entails the exchange of information, joint risk analysis, joint operations and the shared use of European and national capabilities and resources.

For the **European Border and Coast Guard** to implement effectively European Integrated Border Management, a close cooperation between its constituent parts, namely the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and the Member States' border guards is key. This close cooperation is notably necessary so as to guarantee the pooling of resources ensuring effective EU reaction capacities and exchanging information to guarantee European situational awareness. The European Border and Coast Guard has to be provided with all legal, institutional, administrative and operational capacities and the necessary resources to conduct effective and efficient activities within its mandate.

To strengthen the reaction capabilities at national and EU level, the **development** of capabilities of the European Border and Coast Guard should be put in place and supported by preventive tools such as vulnerability assessments by the Agency to identify shortcomings in terms of capacity.

To ensure mutual trust, **European Integrated Border Management should guarantee the full respect of fundamental rights**, with a specific focus on vulnerable groups and minors, in all border management and return activities, including the respect of the *non-refoulement* principle.

**Persons performing European border guarding and return duties should discharge these duties with a high level of professionalism** and adhere to high ethical values.

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<sup>1</sup> Article 80.

Adequate training capacity should be ensured at European and national level, including on the respect of fundamental rights.

### **The further development of the tools enabling European Integrated Border Management**

European Integrated Border Management should **contribute to unified and harmonised implementation of border control rules and standards** in line with the provisions of the Schengen Borders Code and the Union standards for border management. Border control should be risk analysis driven and supported by the use of state-of-the-art equipment and modern IT systems.

**Reliable and comprehensive situational awareness of the border situation should be maintained to guarantee a high level of ability to take adequate measures at European and national level.** A comprehensive near to real-time situational picture should be established and shared in the framework of EUROSUR, including monitoring of the migratory situation in all relevant third countries and secondary movements within EU.

**Risk analyses** should be performed to support strategic and operational planning and decision-making. The relevant data should be collected and shared in the framework of the European Border and Coast Guard, especially to support the Agency in delivering centralised awareness from a European perspective.

**Continuous (24/7)** and adequate reaction capability should be ensured at national level to properly respond to all border incidents, to unpredictable changes at the external borders, including large scale migration flows.

Comprehensive, tested and constantly **updated contingency plans** should be put in place, including on the use of European and national capacities and instruments. These plans should be assessed by the Agency via the vulnerability assessments (i.e. simulation exercises).

The joint efforts of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency and Members States should guarantee that **EU rapid reaction capacities** are in place to quickly strengthen, depending on the needs, the border control at the affected border crossing points or border sections through the relevant European Border and Coast Guard mechanisms (i.e. Rapid Reaction Pools) in response to any development jeopardising the well-functioning of the Schengen area.

**The protection and saving of lives at external borders is a key priority** in European Integrated Border Management; the capacity and operational readiness to conduct **search and rescue** operations should be an integral part of all the surveillance operations at the external sea borders.

In parallel, returns are an integral part of the chain of migration management and the functioning of the European Integrated Border Management. All third-country nationals who are subject of a return decision issued by a Member State should be effectively and swiftly returned. To this end adequate return capacities at European and National level need to be ensured.

### **Better integration with activities on internal borders**

**European quality control through the Schengen Evaluations and the Vulnerability Assessments** is an essential tool to guarantee the continuous health check on the effective

implementation of European Integrated Border Management and the constant preparedness to respond to any challenges. The results of the quality control should be taken into account when prioritising the use of the EU Funds at the national level and the European level.

Member States should take appropriate technical and operational measures within the Schengen area to **ensure effective countering of secondary movements, irregular migration and cross-border crime related to external borders**. In line with the Commission Recommendation on proportionate police checks and police cooperation in the Schengen area, national capacity to intensify police checks inside the territory including border areas should be increased.

### **Better integration of relevant policies**

European Integrated Border Management serves both **migration and security policies** of the Union.

**The capacity to combat cross-border crime and terrorism at the external borders should be strengthened**, so that the competent authorities can detect and prevent cross-border crime and detect foreign terrorist fighters on external borders. The cooperation between the European Border and Coast Guard, Europol, Eurojust and where necessary Interpol in this respect should be reinforced.

All relevant EU Agencies (European Border and Coast Guard, European Asylum Support Office, EUROPOL and Fundamental Rights Agency) should have constant readiness to **deploy migration management support teams as per the example of already established hotspots**. Member States should have the required legal framework and operational readiness to host or to support European hotspots.

### **Better integration with relevant activities of third countries**

To prevent irregular migration and cross-border crime, to enhance effective returns and to facilitate legitimate travel, close practical **cooperation with third countries** is essential. Priority should be given to EU candidate countries, countries of origin and transit for irregular migration and other cross-border crimes. Particular efforts should be made to support **effective returns**. The cooperation with third countries should involve a wide array of measures (liaison officers, the exchange of a common situational picture and capacity building), while using all available EU funds to promote this cooperation.

### **Better integration with the available funding**

An **adequate distribution of dedicated EU financial resources** is needed to ensure that Member States that are on the frontline have sufficient capacity to address the challenges they are confronted with, for the benefit of the EU as a whole. The **sufficient human and technical contributions** are provided by Member States to enable the European Border and Coast Guard to conduct the relevant operational activities.

The European Integrated Border Management should be supported by the specific EU funds, by using to their full potential the existing national programmes under Internal Security Fund and Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund as well as other relevant resources such as the Instrument for Pre-accession Assistance for supporting the cooperation with third countries. In a long term, the effective implementation of the European Integrated Border Management will depend on the strategic options as set out in the Communication from the Commission on the future Multi-Annual Financial Framework.