



‘Weaknesses in the management of the EU external borders have led to uncontrolled inflows of irregular migrants in the EU.’

European Parliament – Legislative Train Schedule, Towards a New Policy on Migration: Preventing Irregular Migration

Online Module: Executive Summary

Illegal immigration – also known as irregular immigration – involves migrants who, for various reasons, either:

- cannot legally cross the border into a particular country, or
- cannot stay legally in the country they have entered – for example, if they have a temporary work visa, but carry on working after this.

The vast majority of illegal immigration is facilitated by organised crime groups. In 2015, the flow of illegal migrants entering the EU reached record levels of over one million, providing the criminal networks involved with turnovers estimated at EUR 3-6 billion. Although the migration flows have fallen since then, new crises and unstable political and economic situations could cause more people to leave their countries, including people who had never thought about leaving before.

The Facilitated Illegal Immigration online module is targeted at law enforcement officers and judicial personnel who tackle organised crime facilitating illegal immigration, including criminal investigators, decision makers, external borders management, judges and prosecutors. Its aim is to help to improve the response to dealing with migrant smuggling, which facilitates illegal immigration flows into the EU. This includes fostering greater cooperation between the various actors – the judiciary and law enforcement at national level, EU agencies, relevant non-EU countries and the private sector.

The module consists of nine topic chapters and a glossary of terms and abbreviations related to facilitated illegal immigration. Users can also check their levels of understanding of each of the topics by considering a selection of quiz questions.

The individual chapters are as follows:

1. **Introduction**
2. **Trends & strategic risk analysis:** This chapter covers the statistics, reports and risk analyses produced on illegal migration, the different migration routes most used by migrant smugglers, and the potential for illegal migrants to become the victims of such crimes as trafficking in human beings (THB) and forced labour.
3. **Criminal investigation:** Here the most prominent aspects of criminal investigation are presented.
4. **Online activities of smugglers:** This chapter is concerned with how the internet is being used to support migrant smuggling, especially its social media networks and channels.
5. **Document fraud:** This chapter covers the use of document fraud to facilitate illegal immigration.
6. **International cooperation:** Here the main aspects and tools of international cooperation are presented.
7. **Legal framework and judicial tools:** This chapter focuses on the framework of international judicial cooperation, including the main EU legislation and organisations like Eurojust.
8. **Public-private partnerships:** This chapter characterises law enforcement cooperation with relevant private sector: companies, such as international money transfer companies, courier companies and social media.
9. **Prevention:** This final chapter deals with measures that are being implemented by EU member states to prevent or reduce illegal migration as well as how to prevent secondary migration, from one EU country to another.