

LATEST TRENDS IN MIGRANT SMUGGLING: NEARLY 7000 SUSPECTED SMUGGLERS REPORTED, INCREASED EXPLOITATION, HIGHER PRICES

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[Press Release](#)

Between January and June 2016, Europol received intelligence on more than 7000 newly-identified migrant smuggling suspects. 95% of them are male, with an average age of 36. Recent data also shows that migrant smuggling remains an increasingly profitable business for criminals, with the prices for migrant smuggling having tripled. These are only a few of the most recent trends perceived by Europol and published today.

At the end of last summer, migrants were paying between EUR 2000 and 5000 for their entire trip, i.e. from the country of origin to a final destination country in the EU. Nowadays, prices have increased significantly, with migrants paying up to EUR 3000 for just one part of the journey, for example from the country of origin to the EU entry country. More then needs to be paid for the next part of the journey. One of the consequences is that the overall time between leaving the country of origin and arriving in the country of destination is longer. Last year, the trips were sometimes completed in one to two weeks; now a journey can last for months. An increase in pressure on secondary movement routes is expected.

Another indication, and a possible explanation for the above is the increase in labour exploitation; migrants may be forced to work to pay their large debts with the smugglers. Recent figures show that, while in 2015 0.2% of migrants declared that they had to work to pay back smugglers, this rose to 5% in 2016.

Europol and its European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) currently has 42 experts and analysts providing operational and analytical support to the EU Member States fighting migrant smuggling. Together they have so far supported 55 high-level investigations. Europol experts are currently deployed at the hotspots in Greece and Italy and [200 guest officers have been nominated](#).

More information can be found in the [EPMT infographic](#).

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