

# Annual Report of the European Migrant Smuggling Centre



**Cornelia Riehle**

## News

On 23 February 2022, the European Migrant Smuggling Centre (EMSC) at Europol published its [sixth annual report](#) for the year 2021. The report once again confirms migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings (THB) as being among the most serious criminal threats facing the EU.

According to the report, migrant smuggling activities along most of the routes to and within the EU increased in 2021. Although migrant smuggling relies on a variety of means of transport, leaders of smuggling networks can increasingly coordinate their criminal operations remotely, thereby making lucrative profits.

As for THB, the report states that the crime is being increasingly digitalized, involving THB processes such as recruitment, contacts, the advertising of services conducted online, and remote coordination of operations. In addition, victims are very often identified and recruited via the Internet's ability to reach a broad audience. Sexual exploitation remains the most frequently reported form of THB in the EU, but labour exploitation is also increasingly being reported.

Lastly, the report points to the Europol Monitoring Team Report - a weekly intelligence picture on migrant smuggling and trafficking in human beings, which issued its 500th edition in 2021.

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