



EASO - Europol - Frontex INTELLIGENCE NOTIFICATION

2nd Update

27/03/2019

Announcements of possible starting time and point of departure of Greece-based 'Caravan'

The European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Europol and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (EBCGA / Frontex) within their respective areas of competence, followed up on a potential mobilization of migrants from Syria and other countries of origin stranded in Turkey and Greece.

EASO¹, EUROPOL² and FRONTEX³ as the Justice and Home Affairs agencies involved used updated intelligence received and developed since the last update (as of 15/03/2019) for the compilation of this report. To this end, the three agencies remain fully committed to ensuring the release, based on need-to-know principles, of regular updates aimed at keeping stakeholders appropriately informed.

Key Developments

- **The Caravan 'Glitter of Hope' (Greece) will supposedly start in Ioannina/north-western Greece;**
- **The assembly should be starting from 25/03/2019 and the departure is set for 05/04/2019;**

What is happening?

Initial information collected from open sources and later shared with Europol revealed that on 26/02/2019, a Syrian journalist residing in Turkey under 'temporary protection' has broken the news about a discussion group established on the internet enabled communication platform *Telegram*.

The initial Telegram discussion group's⁴ objective was to facilitate the movement of **Syrians in Turkey towards Greece and onwards**. In recent weeks several such channels and groups, mostly on the messaging service *Telegram* and/or the social media platform *Facebook* have been set up.

¹ EASO social media monitoring; LIMITED.

² EUROPOL's EMSC (ICH); Europol Basic Protection Level (BPL).

³ FRONTEX Joint FSC-RAU; LIMITED.

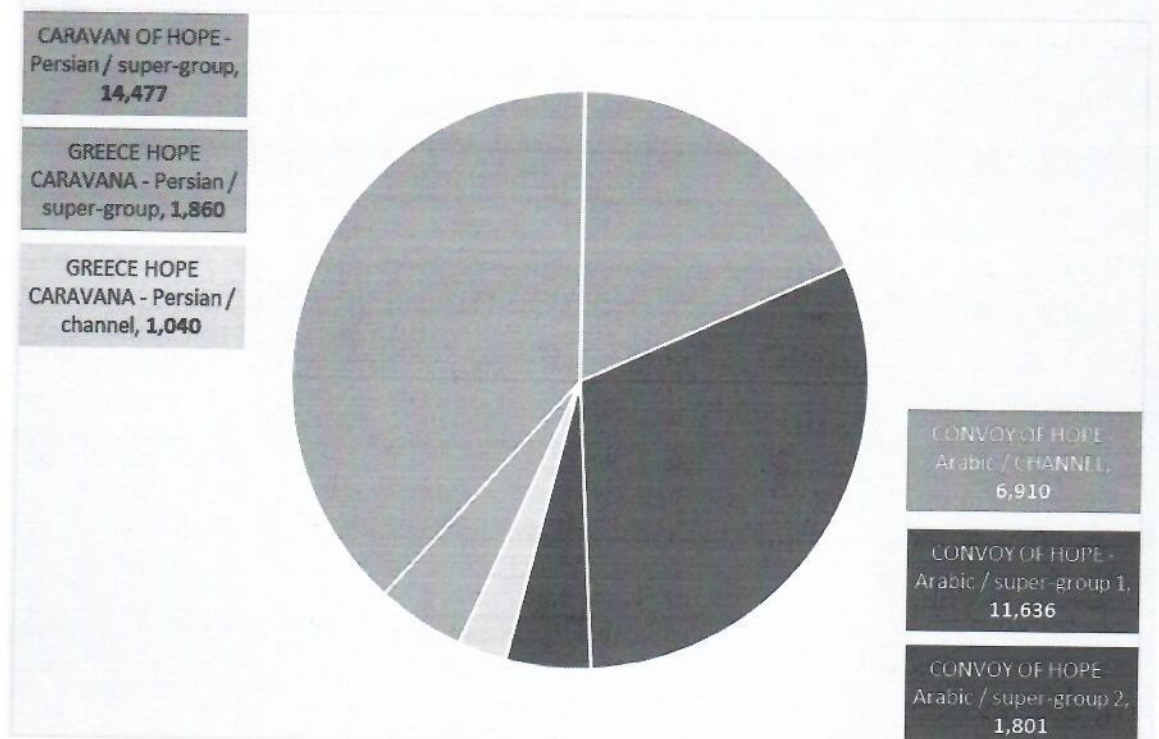
⁴ A group consist of participation of the members while in a channel, only the admin can send messages, which are received by all the members. A regular group can have 200 members, a super group can have 100.000 members while a channel can have an unlimited number of subscribers.

The following *Convoy* or *Caravan* projects were identified by the Agencies :

- **'Convoy of Hope'**; targeting Arab speakers, i.e. Syrian migrants located in Turkey;
 - "official" communication via *Telegram*;
 - additional information taken from *Facebook*;
- **Caravan 'Glitter of Hope'**; targeting Arab speakers, i.e. Syrian migrants located in Greece;
 - "official" communication on *Facebook*;
 - no *Telegram* group/channel set up;
 - additional *WhatsApp* groups exist;
- **'Greece Hope Caravana'**; targeting Persian (Dari/Farsi) speakers, i.e. Afghan and Iranian migrants – most likely located in Greece;
 - "official" communication via *Telegram*;
- **'Caravan of Hope'**; targeting Persian (Dari/Farsi) speakers, i.e. Afghan and Iranian migrants;
 - "official" communication via *Telegram*;

As of 27/03/2019, the **Caravan 'Glitter of Hope'** (Greece) , *Facebook* community is followed by 8,341 people and gained 7,989 likes.

As of 25/03/2019, a total of **37,724 members⁵** (+15%) subscribed to at least one of the *Telegram* groups or channels.



⁵ It is possible – and in this case likely – that at least some of the members of a super group are members of a channel at the same time. In addition, it is not possible to identify individual members; the number of individual subscribers might thus be considerably lower.

Latest Developments

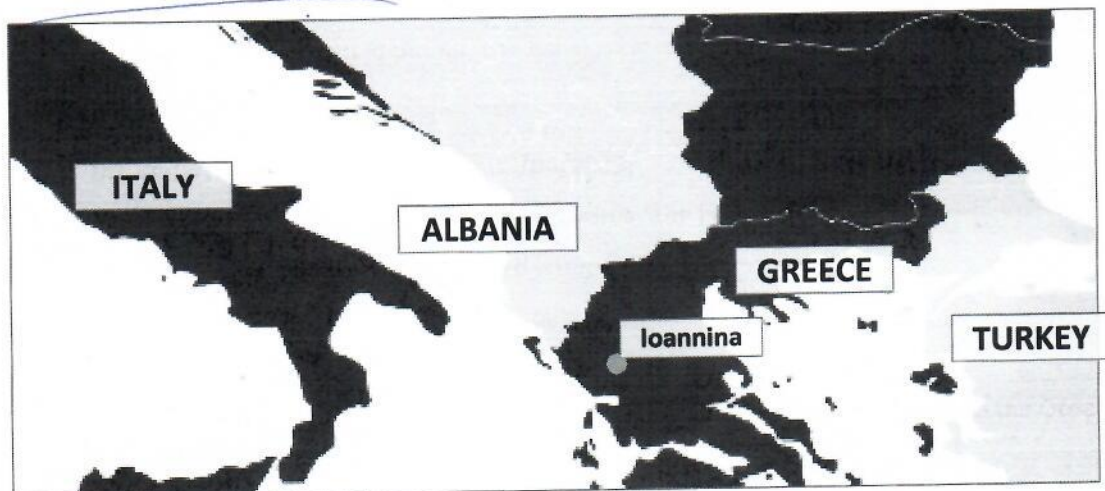
Turkey / 'Convoy of Hope'⁶

- No new information regarding the announced departure date of **early April**, most likely in the first or second week of April;
- The precise starting date would be announced approximately **4-5 days in advance**;
- **The organizers confirmed they would seek permission from the Turkish government;**
- The organizers are still willing to **meet the other "Convoy/Caravan" in Greece**;
- The Turkish "Convoy" would apparently seek to **organize busses**, that would supposedly be provided by humanitarian organizations;
- Since the "Convoy/Caravan" in Greece plans to cross the border by foot, it would take more and would allow the Turkish "Convoy" to be able to catch up and **cross the border together.**

Greece / 'Caravan 'Glitter of Hope'^{7,8}

- **Departure will be from Ioannina, Greece** – as the assembly point, supposedly an open refugee camp;
- Time of departure; it would be advised to assemble in Ioannina starting 25/03/2019 until the **departure day which is set for 05/04/2019**;
- From there the "Caravan" would move towards "the borders";
- Exact GPS location later will be shared later;
- Buses from Athens and Thessaloniki would be available;
- The organizers advised to take provisions for 10 days;

Ioannina's geographical location indicates "the borders" in question could relate to the Greek-Albanian border region.



The information provided on the 'Caravan 'Glitter of Hope' could not be independently confirmed by Europol outside the social media account where it was initially published.

⁶ Information gathered from Telegram by Europol IRU, Europol Basic Protection Level (BPL).

⁷ Information gathered from Facebook by EASO Social Media Monitoring, LIMITED.

⁸ Information provided in parallel by ECGBA (Frontex), SIENA, LIMITED.



Europol, partner agencies and selected EU MS LEA are exploring all available options to further verify and confirm the accuracy of the information included in this report.

Operational information on the developments presented in the current report was shared by Europol via SIENA with the law enforcement authorities best positioned to take action and feedback is expected.

Way forward

EASO, Europol and Frontex, will continue to make use of their capacities, in a complementary and coordinated way, to monitor and, if possible, to contribute to the development of adequate counter-measures aimed at mitigating the impact of mass movement of irregular migrant across the land borders. Updates will be shared dynamically with all relevant partners with a view to providing the relevant stakeholders with updated information to support the tactical and political decision-making.