The interior ministers of Slovenia, Croatia, and Italy met in Nova Gorica, Slovenia, to discuss strategies for preventing illegal border crossings, combating migrant smuggling, and addressing terrorism. They emphasized this collaboration as a model of regional cooperation extending beyond the three countries.

During the meeting, the Directors General of the three nations' police forces signed a Memorandum of Understanding to coordinate joint trilateral patrols along Croatia's external borders. Croatian Interior Minister Davor Božinović highlighted the effectiveness of these efforts, reporting a 58% reduction in illegal crossings in Croatia in 2024 compared to 2023, with a further 60% decrease observed in the first weeks of 2025. He noted the active role of Croatian police, which prevented 71,000 individual crossings last year, and emphasized the memorandum as a framework for future EU-wide approaches to managing illegal migration.

Slovenian Minister Boštjan Poklukar supported an agreement between Frontex and Bosnia and Herzegovina to strengthen migration control and enforcement. Božinović explained that a significant portion of illegal migrants exploit visa-free access to neighbouring countries in the Western Balkans before attempting to cross borders illegally, often using commercial flights. He also highlighted Croatia's efforts in tackling migrant smuggling, noting the arrest of 1,834 smugglers in 2024. Italian Interior Minister Matteo Piantedosi praised the cooperative measures being implemented, underlining their role in addressing irregular migration and human smuggling effectively.

Source(s)

- Ministry of the Interior | Ministarstvo unutarnjih poslova (20 January, 2025), Nova Gorica: Ministri Hrvatske, Slovenije i Italije o situaciji na granicama [Nova Gorica: Ministers of Croatia, Slovenia and Italy discuss the situation at the borders], https://mup.gov.hr/vijesti/nova-gorica-ministri-hrvatske-slovenije-i-italije-o-situaciji-na-granicama/294566

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