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The Secretariat

Transnational Threats Department
Border Security and Management Unit

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REPORT

**OSCE Border Security and Management
National Focal Points Network**

Thematic Meeting

Emerging Technologies in Border Security and Management –

Information Management Technologies

Amsterdam/Schiphol, the Netherlands

19 – 20 April 2017

Executive summary

The workshop on *Information Management Technologies in Border Security and Management* was organized and conducted in co-operation with the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee, namely its Border Security Training Centre in Amsterdam / Schiphol on 19 – 20 April 2017. More than 40 NFPs and subject matter experts from 20 participating States gathered to share their experiences and learn about the latest developments in the use of information management technologies in border security and management including the lessons learnt and best practices in implementing advance passenger information exchange (API) systems. The event was also attended by the representatives of the OSCE structures (OSCE field operations) as well as of Europol, Frontex, and Interpol. The event was designed and delivered as a response to specific requests from NFPs, which were expressed during the 2016 Annual NFP Network Meeting held in April 2016 in Berlin, Germany.

The workshop provided the participants with a unique opportunity to discuss the advantages and shortfalls of various types of information management systems (IMS) used by national border security and management (BSM) services, to learn about non-standard solutions and advanced applications which can assist in more efficient day-to-day operations at the border. The participants also were given a rare opportunity to get familiarized with the Travel Document Fraud Expertise Centre of the Royal Netherlands Marechaussee Border Security Training Centre and its main activities.

While sharing their national experiences the participants were invited to discuss the following issues: IMS in BSM; data collection and input into IMS; information processing: risk analysis and criminal analysis management tools; information exchange mechanisms and tools.

Contributions were made by the representatives of Frontex, Europol, Interpol, Royal Netherlands

Marechaussee, and the representatives from BSM services of Albania, Belgium, Georgia, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Moldova.

The participants were informed about the most recent OSCE border related capacity building activities. In addition, they were briefed on the adoption of the *OSCE Decision No. 6/16 on Enhancing the Use of Advance Passenger Information*¹ (API) that is enhancing the OSCE framework for providing assistance to the OSCE pSs in this area (by means of conducting needs assessments, providing a platform for sharing best practices, enhancing inter-agency and regional co-operation, fostering private – public partnerships, defining the API system implementation strategy, and identifying the costs and potential donors for its implementation).

Discussion on national IMS, the following findings were made:

- important to find the balance between safety and mobility for national BSM agencies;
- important for national BSM services to benefit from the information and experience exchange platforms provided by Interpol, Europol, CEPOL, OSCE, European Association Airport and Seaport Police (EAASP), European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex), etc.;
- to raise the efficiency of BSM services the OSCE pSs use the following **good practices**: “single window” approach, intra-agency and inter-agency co-operation mechanisms (like national IMB centers, Police and Customs Co-operation Centers (PCCCs), focal points, liaison officers, embassies attaches), interagency and regional information sharing systems (e.g. Baltic States Information Exchange Gear (BSIEG)), automatic number plate recognition systems, scanner images exchange mechanisms, risk analysis tools, watch lists, risk profiling, automated identification of divergent travel pattern, buildup of tailor made API solutions within the national IMS, incident registration applications, encrypted networks, use of API not only for migration control, but for other law enforcement purposes as well, customs valuation databases, automated preclearance systems, use of open resources like e.g. EdisonTD², Public Register of Authentic travel and identity Documents Online (PRADO)³ and iFADO⁴, customized databases, video sharing systems, translation systems, portable solutions, data bases integration, use of Secure Information Exchange Network Application (SIENA), use of specialized resource systems like EUVID (European Vehicle Identification Database), scanned images sharing system, etc.;
- Some OSCE pSs have already launched the implementation of API and PNR (Passenger Name Record) systems as well as automatic border control (ABC) at the airports, others plan to do so in the near future;
- implementation of API systems increases efficiency and allows focusing on potentially high risk passengers;

¹ <http://www.osce.org/cio/288256?download=true>

² <http://www.edisontd.net/>

³ <http://www.consilium.europa.eu/prado/en/prado-start-page.html>

⁴ https://www.ifado.consilium.europa.eu/dana-na/auth/url_default/welcome.cgi

- API, PNR and Passenger Information Units (PIU) could be integrated in terms of a harmonized legal framework and standard operating procedures, as well as technically (on IT level);
- the IMSs might also be complemented by situation management centers that support the operational units providing an updated picture, as near to real-time as possible, of the situation at the border and are exercising the following functions: monitoring (situation, media, crisis monitoring and information exchange), and reporting (detection reporting, information validation, information sharing);
- it would be beneficial to extend the Interpol National Central Bureaus' (NCB) network to national BSM agencies;
- successful API systems implementation requires close engagement with airlines in order to improve data quality and accuracy and to develop a fair penalty system for those who do not comply;
- not only the air carriers, but also the other modes of transportation (cruises, ferries, trains, etc.) should be encouraged to partner with the BSM services in implementation of API.

The following gaps and challenges were identified by the participants in the course of this event:

- lack of data on the use of information;
- data privacy concerns;
- lack of integration among different databases and the absence of comprehensive mechanisms to automatically cross check the data against the other national agencies databases;
- lack of procedural and technical connectivity and interoperability among the systems;
- challenges in the implementation of the so called EU PNR directive⁵ and its relation to the 2004 EU API Directive;
- technical issues associated with PNR and API systems implementation: implementation cost, political will, lack of standard operating procedures (SOPs) on the national level, and issues with false hits/positives.

To conclude the event, the participants were invited to split into two groups and develop a concept of an ideal IMS. **Please find the key features that – according to participants – should be incorporated into the system (the findings of both groups summarized):**

- In order to design national IMS, three challenges need to be taken into consideration: security, mobility and revenue protection;
- the information management systems have to be user-friendly, intuitive and responsive;
- it should ideally integrate all the law enforcement agencies under one umbrella; for that purpose the following options were suggested:
 - establishment of law enforcement co-ordination centers on the national level;
 - national level harmonization of the national legal framework as well as the introduction of unified standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the functioning of IMS;

⁵ <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/PE-71-2015-INIT/en/pdf>

- use of cloud umbrellas to technically integrate all the law enforcement services via “umbrella systems” with the national government as a custodian (on national level, some segments could be extended to regional level);
- alternatively, interfaces could be created to interconnect the national agencies databases and IMS. Such interfaces might send automatic alerts about the availability of related data in other agencies’ database in order to launch the procedure of obtaining data;
- additionally, the IMS should provide for: information availability, integrity, security; functionalities / features laid down in the EU SMART borders package⁶; unified entry-exit system combined with PNR system; stolen motor vehicles detection system; automatic alerts production, integration with Interpol data bases; data base of persons attempting to enter the EU territory illegally; persons, vehicles, cargo pre-clearance options (incl. API systems); single window approach; and the possibility for common risk assessment for all the law enforcement agencies;
- taking into account the amount of data to be processed, the IMS should possess/contain a machine learning function to analyze massive amounts of data;
- the best practices being used by customs services might be considered for integration into other law enforcement services IMSs.

Speaking about the follow up activities the NFPs expressed their interest to continue **focusing on implementation of API systems as well as on:**

- practical functioning of the Schengen Information System (SIS II⁷);
- ways to unify and make the work of the border guard/police and customs officers easier and provide them with “one window” solutions;
- compare costs of implementation of various technologies and IT systems;
- ways for integrating and harmonizing the PIU to make use of both API and PNR data;
- machine learning functions of the IMS, automatic systems for data processing, automatic analysis systems;
- new technologies in personal documents processing;
- border surveillance procedures and technologies being used;
- it would be useful to support the follow up activities by the field visits, exhibition of private companies;
- taking stock of what has already been implemented and share experiences.

The participants also approved the idea of launching the working group focusing on APIs implementation in BSM agencies within the OSCE BSM National Focal Points Network.

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/smart-borders_en

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/borders-and-visas/schengen-information-system_en