

Brussels, 28 November 2017
(OR. en)

14710/17

LIMITE

DAPIX 392

NOTE

From: General Secretariat of the Council
To: Working Party on Information Exchange and Data Protection (DAPIX)
Subject: Update on the Informal Working Group on PNR

1. Introduction

On 20 and 21 September 2017, the first IWG PNR meeting chaired by Germany took place in Berlin. To encourage detailed discussions between experts from the participating Member States, the meeting included two working sessions in four separate sub-working groups (“Operations”, “Legal”, “Carrier connection”, “Interoperability”).¹

One of the main topics on the IWG PNR meeting was to structure the communication both between the Passenger Information Units (PIUs) and between PIUs and Europol. As suitable tools to build up the necessary network, a combination of SIENA and PIU.Net had been discussed.

¹ 12329/17

2. Questionnaire

Within the sub-working group (SWG) “Interoperability”, the delegates aimed at defining the technical features for communication, both between national PIUs and between PIUs and Europol. In this context, the advantages of SIENA were highlighted, in particular its configurability, so that it can be highly customized if required.

Since a common solution needed to be established as soon as possible in order to meet the implementation deadline of May 2018, the sub-working group agreed to perform a mapping exercise to get an overview of the SIENA implementation status in the Member States with regard to PIUs. The mapping exercise was coordinated by Sweden as chair of the SWG “Interoperability” together with Europol as the secretariat of the IWG PNR. The disseminated questionnaire included the following questions:

- a) Does your Passenger Information Unit (PIU) have access to SIENA at this time?
- b) If not at this time, how does your authority currently connect to SIENA, and/or is your national competent authority responsible for the Europol National Unit within your country?
- c) If you are not using SIENA today within your competent authority, what means of international information exchange are you currently using?
- d) If there is no connection to SIENA currently, what assistance (e.g. political, technical) would you require to gain access?
- e) Which is your competent authority for API?
- f) If it is the same competent authority as the one for PNR have you/are you planning to have them working together?
- g) Does your API-competent authority have a national (border) targeting center that use automatic searches of API – i.e. searching for cross matches with wanted lists and similar?

3. Outcome

The answers to the aforementioned questions were gathered by Europol and will be presented to DAPIX by the chair of the SWG "Interoperability".

- a) In most Member States, PIUs are currently in the process of being created, and most Member States expressed a will to connect their PIU to SIENA.
- b) Some Member States have not placed their PIU within a police agency, which might lead to difficulties connecting them to SIENA.
- c) All official police information and communication channels are currently in use and may be used further on. Some PIUs even may also have access to CT communication channels (such as the CT-closed user group within SIENA).
- d) The majority of Member States does not see a need for further assistance. However, the SWG "Interoperability" will, as well as all other SWGs, meet during upcoming IWG PNR meetings and assistance may be rendered at any time.
- e) Most Member States have appointed their border authorities as competent authorities for the handling of Advance Passenger Information (API) data; some have appointed police authorities and some MS authorities, which serve as both a border and a police authority
- f) Cooperation between competent authorities, if necessary, is foreseen in most Member States.
- g) To the last question, a majority of Member States replied 'yes'. Three Member States did not send any answer.

4. Recommendation

As a result of this mapping exercise and with the experience of the Berlin IWG PNR meeting, the IWG PNR recommends that expert discussion in sub working groups should be a key element of upcoming IWG meetings. These discussions should ensure a harmonized way forward and mainly focus on the implementation of SIENA and PIU.Net as dedicated tools for communication. The development of PIU.Net will therefore be furthered within the respective ISF-funded project and will be discussed and closely accompanied by the IWG PNR.
