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**LIMITE**

**DAPIX 55  
ENFOPOL 94  
CT 33  
ENFOCUSTOM 39  
CRIMORG 25  
SCHENGEN 6  
VISA 41  
SIRIS 14  
COPEN 55  
ASIM 18  
FRONT 56  
COMIX 100  
JAI 185**

**NOTE**

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From:	Presidency
To:	Working Party on Information Exchange and Data Protection (DAPIX)
No. prev. doc.:	6243/2/18 REV 2
Subject:	Manual on Law Enforcement Information Exchange

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The Manual on Law Enforcement Information Exchange provides detailed information about cross-border information exchange and cooperation. Member States' law enforcement officers are invited to use it for training purposes or for instant consultation. The purpose of this Practical Advisor is to increase the efficiency in the use of the instruments available.

The Practical Advisor provides a comparison of requirements for exchange of information via different channels (Interpol/ Europol/ SIRENE/ Liaison Officers/ PCCC), as well as other practical information and advices related to instruments used within the international law enforcement cooperation which could be beneficial not only for the SPOC officers, but also for other national law enforcement authorities.

**1. MAIN EXISTING CHANNELS FOR INTERNATIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT COOPERATION**

	<b>INTERPOL</b>	<b>EUROPOL</b>	<b>SISII/SIRENE</b>	<b>Liaison Officers' network</b>	<b>Police Customs Cooperation Centres</b>
<b>Competences</b>	<p>Art.2 of <b>Interpol Constitution:</b>  <i>“(1) To ensure and promote mutual assistance between all criminal police authorities within the limits of the laws existing in the different countries ... ”;</i>  <i>(2) To establish and develop all institutions likely to contribute effectively to the prevention and suppression of ordinary law crimes.”</i></p>	<p>Art. 3 of <b>Regulation 2016/794</b>  <i>“Europol shall support and strengthen action by the competent authorities of the Member States and their mutual cooperation in preventing and combating serious crime affecting two or more Member States, terrorism and forms of crime which affect a common interest covered by a Union policy, as listed in Annex I”</i></p>	<p>Art. 1 and art. 2 of <b>CD 2007/533/JHA</b>  <i>“The purpose of SIS II shall be...to ensure a high level of security within the area of freedom, security and justice of the European Union ...”</i>  <i>“entry and processing of alerts on persons and objects and exchange of supplementary information and additional data for the purpose of police and judicial cooperation in criminal matters”.<sup>1</sup></i></p>	<p>According to concluded <b>bilateral or multilateral agreements</b></p> <p>Liaison officers from one Member State may also represent the interests of one or more other Member States.</p> <p>Member States which do not have liaison officers in a third country or international organisation may make a request to another Member State which does have liaison officers in the third country or international organisation concerned, with a view to the exchange of relevant information.            Council Decision 2006/560/JHA</p>	<p>Art. 39 (4) and (5) of the Convention Implementing the Schengen Agreement (CISA)  <i>“In border areas, cooperation may be covered by arrangements between the competent Ministers of the Contracting Parties”</i>            PCCCs are established on the basis of agreements between the contracting parties and their activities are related to and carried out in the border area.</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information exchange under SFD (use of SFD form)</li> <li>• Follow-up exchange under Prüm Decisions</li> <li>• Info exchange with regard to Interpol Notices</li> <li>• Sending MLA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information Exchange under SFD – SIENA Swedish initiative request/answer (use of SFD form)</li> <li>• Follow-up exchange under Prüm Decisions</li> <li>• Out-of-Europol-mandate information exchange according to national legislation</li> <li>• Sending MLA</li> </ul>	<p>Exchange of information on the SIS alerts.            Any other information exchange according to national legislation (e.g.: cross-border operations, hot pursuit)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of information - relates in particular to petty and moderately serious crime, illegal migration and public order; other crime areas can be determined in the agreement;</li> <li>• Assisting border area operations - surveillance, hot pursuit, investigations, joint control, operations for maintaining or restoring public order;</li> <li>• Readmission</li> </ul>	

<sup>1</sup> Council Decision 2007/533/JHA of 12 June 2007 on the establishment, operation and use of the second generation Schengen Information System (SIS II)  
 Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment, operation and use of the Schengen Information System (SIS) in the field of police cooperation and judicial cooperation in criminal matter  
 Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the establishment, operation and use of the Schengen Information System (SIS) in the field of border checks  
 Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the use of the Schengen Information System for the return of illegally staying third-country nationals

<b>Member States</b>	<a href="https://www.interpol.int/member-countries">https://www.interpol.int/member-countries</a>	<a href="https://www.europol.europa.eu/partners-agreements">https://www.europol.europa.eu/partners-agreements</a>	Schengen countries	Compendium on law enforcement officers (see doc.10095/18)	PCCC Europol Platform Of Expert or Manual on Law Enforcement Information Exchange – national fact sheets (doc 6727/18)
<b>Secure communication tool/application</b>	<b>I 24/7</b>	<b>SIENA</b> Certified for exchange of EU classified information	<b>SIS II TestaNG</b> – used for exchange of additional information for example for deleted alerts as well as information exchange under art.40	<b>e-mail or other</b>	<b>Agreed between contracting parties SIENA</b>
<b>24/7 monitoring</b>	Yes	Europol Operational Centre – yes; 24/7 operational MS and Third party operational could be checked in SIENA/Info/SIENA 24/7 monitoring/ SIENA 24/7 SPOC contact details file	Yes	Bilaterally agreed	Yes or other opening hours could be agreed
<b>Languages</b>	English, French, Arabic, Spanish	English (always for communication with Europol) or a language familiar to both parties	English; in particular cases a language familiar to both parties can be used	Bilaterally agreed	Determined in the agreement between contracting parties
<b>Exchange of classified information</b>	No	<b>Yes</b> SIENA is accredited for exchange of classified information up to level EU CONFIDENTIAL. Main information exchange is up to level EU RESTRICTED. EU CONFIDENTIAL – depends of national accreditation. Information exchange is according to Council Decision 2013/488/EU on the security rules for protecting EU classified information	No	<b>Yes</b> According to bilateral agreements for exchange of classified information	No/Yes Determined in the agreement between contracting parties

<p><b>Proposed criteria for choice of channels:</b> (see doc 6721/14)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of information with all Interpol member countries</li> <li>• Interpol notices (wanted/missing persons, arrest warrants, extraditions)</li> <li>• Verification of person's identity / documents</li> <li>• 24/7 availability and urgency</li> <li>• Exchange under Swedish Framework Decision, Prüm Decisions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU reach and Europol mandate</li> <li>• Contributions to AP, EMPACT, analysis, JITs</li> <li>• Exchange of classified information (up to EU RESTRICTED)</li> <li>• Exchange under Swedish Framework Decision (SIENA form/ UMF), Prüm Decisions, PNR Directive</li> <li>• Urgency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SIS alerts</li> <li>• Cross border surveillance and/or hot pursuit (depending national legislation)</li> <li>• 24/7 availability and urgency</li> <li>• respect the principle of Schengen alerts taking precedence over Interpol alerts issued by Member States</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exchange of classified information (depends of concluded bilateral agreements)</li> <li>• Urgency, trust</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local reach and exchange of information about crimes committed in the border area</li> </ul>
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## **2. INFORMATION EXCHANGE**

### **2.1. Recommended DOs and DON'Ts:**

1. Before sending a request, if possible, perform checks in available international databases in order to avoid “fishing” (for example – check SISII, Interpol Databases, Europol Information System, ECRIS; check DNA, FP and VRD/EUCARIS under the Prüm Decisions before sending a request and point in the subject “With exception of Prüm operational countries”; when sending Interpol communication on person or object with alert in SIS, use “Except Schengen countries”);
2. Sent a request through ONE channel only. If a request is, in exceptional cases, sent through different channels at the same time, this should be clearly indicated on the request for all channels including explanation;
3. The channel is NOT being changed during an on-going operation or during any phase unless it is absolutely necessary. Communicate the change of channel to all parties including the reason for the change and give reference to previous correspondence (channel and reference number);
4. Respect your partner’s choice of channel when replying to the requests;
5. Provide short and clear information about the crime/case – what, where, when, how and who; case reference, competent authority;
6. Specify who is who – suspect, accomplice, victim... ;specify identities (main, alias, misused identity);
7. For persons or objects always indicate Interpol/Schengen ID number of the relevant alert if available;
8. Be clear in your requests for information and if there are several addressee specify the requests to everyone if necessary;

9. Format of writing:
- Names - if known write family name in CAPITAL letters;
  - Dates – use dd/mm/yyyy or use the agreed format of the system or specify the format;
  - Telephone numbers – use international code and then number without spaces;
  - Licence plates – specify country if known and write letters and numbers without spaces (except German licence plates, where the space distinguish between different licence plates);
  - Account numbers – use IBAN.
10. Specify the deadline (if there is any) and give justification (for example - ongoing custody, forthcoming arrests, the case has to go to court before a specific date and etc.);
11. Give a call to the recipient of an URGENT request or in case a message is sent before/after core hours to ensure the prompt handling of the message;
12. Specify when the requested check should be done without revealing the interest;
13. Respect the purposes of and restrictions on the processing of information defined by its provider;
14. Use the “Cc” functionality for recipients with real interest;

15. Indicate the title, full name and telephone number of the person sending or person who has to receive the message if direct contact is needed (for SIENA – write this information in the “Personal communication” text box of the SIENA message);
16. Specify when no reply is needed and/or the provided information is “For information” and the recipient could take measures he/she deems appropriate;
17. For SIENA consider using the Universal Message Format (UMF) for object Person – this will speed up the checks in Europol databases;
18. Give reasons and specify when the answer could be expected if there will be a delay in replying– for example;
19. Don’t “reply to all” when the recipient does not have an interest in the content of the message;
20. Provide the message with the same confidentiality level as the highest classification given to the attachment(s) or any part of the message.

## 2.2. Information exchange Interpol/Europol/SIRENE/LO network/PCCC

	Interpol 24/7	Europol SIENA	SISII/SIRENE	LO network	Police Customs Cooperation Centres
<b>Reference No</b>	Our Ref: Your Ref:	SIENA case messages	Use of forms for the purpose of exchanging supplementary information on SIS alerts (G/L/E/M/H/I/K/J/Q/A/N/O/P forms)	Our Ref: Your Ref:	Special forms for information exchange can be determined in the agreement between contracting parties
					SIENA – see the column for Europol/SIENA
			For free text messages: Our Ref: Your Ref:		For free text messages: Our Ref: Your Ref:
<b>Subject</b>	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
<b>Information</b>	Plain text	Personal communication Crime related content UMF	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
<b>Crime</b>	Plain text	Choose from drop up list	Plain text	Plain text	Plain text
<b>Handling of information</b>	Handling of information could be specified in the text of the message or in the disclaimer.	Choose from drop up list Handling Codes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>H0:</b> “This information may only be used for the purpose of preventing and combating crimes in line with the ER and any other applicable law.”- on default;</li> <li>• <b>H1:</b> “Not to be disclosed in judicial proceedings without the permission of the provider.”</li> <li>• <b>H2:</b> “Not to be disseminated without the permission of the provider.”</li> <li>• <b>H3:</b> “Other restrictions and comments”</li> </ul>	Handling of information could be specified in the text of the message or in the disclaimer.	Handling of information could be specified in the text of the message or in the disclaimer.	Handling of information could be specified in the text of the message or in the disclaimer.

<b>Evaluation</b>	It is not mandatory	<p>Choose from drop up list</p> <p>1.The <b>reliability of the source</b> of information originating from a Member State shall be assessed as far as possible by the providing Member State using the following source evaluation codes: <b>(A)</b>: where there is no doubt as to the authenticity, trustworthiness and competence of the source, or if the information is provided by a source which has proved to be reliable in all instances; <b>(B)</b>: where the information is provided by a source which has in most instances proved to be reliable; <b>(C)</b>: where the information is provided by a source which has in most instances proved to be unreliable; <b>(X)</b>: where the reliability of the source cannot be assessed.</p> <p>2.The <b>accuracy of information</b> originating from a Member State shall be assessed as far as possible by the providing Member State using the following information evaluation codes: <b>(1)</b>: information the accuracy of which is not in doubt; <b>(2)</b>: information known personally to the source but not known personally to the official passing it on; <b>(3)</b>: information not known personally to the source but corroborated by other information already recorded; <b>(4)</b>: information not known personally to the source and which cannot be corroborated.<sup>2</sup></p>	<b>It is not mandatory</b>	It is not mandatory	<b>It is not mandatory</b>
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<sup>2</sup> According to Art.29 of Europol Regulation

<b>Sharing relevant information</b>	IPSG	According to: Art.7, par.6 (a) of <b>Europol Regulation 2016/794</b> (Analytical Projects) art.6 par.2 of <b>Council Framework Decision 2006/960/JHA</b> art. 4, par.2 (b) and art. 9 and 10 of <b>PNR Directive 2016/681</b>	Restrictions - according art. 54 from Regulation 2007/533 and <b>art. 39 of Regulation (EC) 1987/2006</b> data processed in SIS II shall not be transferred or made available to third countries or to international organizations.	With other MS in accordance with CD 2006/560/JHA	
<b>Urgency</b>	According to NCBS Service Standards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urgent - cases where the reason for the urgent classification is clear - within 24 hours</li> <li>Non-urgent - cases - as soon as possible and within 1 month.</li> </ul> Specific deadline could be indicated	<b>Priority:</b> Low, Normal, High <b>“Very urgent”</b> and <b>“Urgent”</b> could be written in the “Subject” or “Crime related content” fields. There is no common rule about time limits for the answer. Specific <b>deadline</b> could be indicated. There is a field for justification of deadline and it is mandatory when the answer is requested in less than or equal to 24 hours	The SIRENE Bureau shall answer all requests for information on alerts, match and hit procedures, made by the other Member States via their SIRENE Bureaux, as soon as possible. In any event a response shall be given within 12 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Very urgent</b></li> <li><b>Urgent</b></li> </ul> There is no common rule about time limits for the answer. Specific deadline could be indicated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very urgent</li> <li>Urgent</li> <li>Normal</li> </ul> There is no common rule about time limits for the answer – they can be determined in the agreement. Specific deadline could be indicated
<b>Confidentiality levels</b>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Europol Public Information</li> <li>Basic Protection Level - for use of LEA only;</li> <li>EU Restricted;</li> <li>EU Confidential</li> </ul>	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unclassified information</li> <li>Restricted/Confidential/Secret/Top secret</li> </ul> Table of equivalence according to bilateral agreement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unclassified information</li> <li>Restricted/ Confidential/ Secret/Top secret</li> </ul> Table of equivalence according to the bilateral agreement for exchange of classified information and agreement for setting up a PCCC

### 2.3. Wanted persons and objects - Interpol / SIS II

Respect the principle of Schengen alerts taking precedence over Interpol alerts issued by Member States.

	INTERPOL	SISII
<b>Wanted persons</b>	 <b>Red Notice</b> / diffusion/Nominals database	Alerts for arrest for surrender or extradition purposes (art. 26 of the SIS II Decision)
<b>Discreet check and specific check (inquiry check)</b>	 <b>Blue Notice</b> / diffusion/ Nominals database	Alerts for discreet and specific checks (art. 36.2 of the SIS II Decision)
<b>Foreign travelling fighters/ Travelling terrorists</b>	 <b>Blue Notice</b> / diffusion/ Nominals database	Alerts for discreet and specific checks (art. 36.2 and 36.3 of the SIS II Decision)
<b>National security</b>	 <b>Blue Notice</b> / diffusion/ Nominals database	Alerts for discreet and specific checks (art. 36.3of the SIS II Decision)
<b>Persons sought for a judicial procedure – establishment of whereabouts</b>	 <b>Blue Notice</b> / diffusion/ Nominals database	Alerts for persons sought for a judicial procedure (art. 34 of the SIS II Decision)
<b>Missing persons</b>	 <b>Yellow Notice</b> /diffusion/ Nominals database	Alerts on missing persons (art. 32 of the SIS II Decision)
<b>Discreet and specific checks of travel means (vehicles, boats, airplanes and containers)</b>	No	Alerts for discreet and specific checks (art. 36 of the SIS II Decision - travel means (vehicles, boats, airplanes and containers)
<b>Refusal of entry or stay for third country nationals for administrative/criminal/national security</b>	No	Alerts for refusal of entry or stay (art. 24 of the SIS II Regulation 1987/2006)
<b>Prohibit leaving Schengen Area</b>	No	Alerts on objects for seizure or use as evidence (art. 38 of the SIS II Decision – expressly invalidated documents with the purpose to avoid travel)
<b>Unidentified deceased persons</b>	 <b>Black Notice</b> / diffusion	No
<b>Stolen/lost documents</b>	Stolen and Lost Travel Documents (SLTD) Stolen Administrative Documents (SAD)	Alerts on objects for seizure or use as evidence (art. 38 of the SIS II Decision) – passports, ID cards, residence permits, visa, driving licences, vehicle registration documents

<b>Lost/stolen objects</b>	Stolen Motor Vehicles database <b>Only for motor vehicles</b>	Alerts on objects for seizure or use as evidence (art. 38 of the SIS II Decision): vehicles, trailers, licence plates, industrial equipment (e.g. agriculture or building machinery – tractors, forklifts, diggers), vehicle registration documents, banknotes, securities and means of payment (e.g. ATM and credit cards), boats and boat engines, airplanes (including helicopters etc.), containers
<b>Stolen works of arts</b>	Works of Arts Database	No
<b>Fire arms</b>	iArms database/Firearms reference table/Ballistic information network	Alerts on objects for seizure or use as evidence (art. 38 of the SIS II Decision)
<b>Other</b>	 <b>Green Notice:</b> warnings and intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes in other countries  <b>Orange Notice:</b> dangerous threats  <b>Purple Notice:</b> modus operandi <b>Interpol - United Nations Security Council</b> <b>Special Notice:</b> groups and individuals who are the targets of UN Security Council Sanctions Committees	No

## **2.4. Information exchange under Council Decision 2008/615/JHA and Council Decision 2008/615/JHA (Prüm Decisions)**

**The Decisions regulate automated exchange of DNA data, fingerprints (FP) data and vehicle registration data (VRD).**

Why we use Prüm with regards of DNA/FP:

- ▶ To identify persons through searches in the DNA or AFIS database of another MS
- ▶ To solve unsolved cases by identifying persons through searches in the DNA or AFIS database of another MS
- ▶ To possibly link crimes in different MS

**The exchange of DNA/ FP is done through 2 steps:**

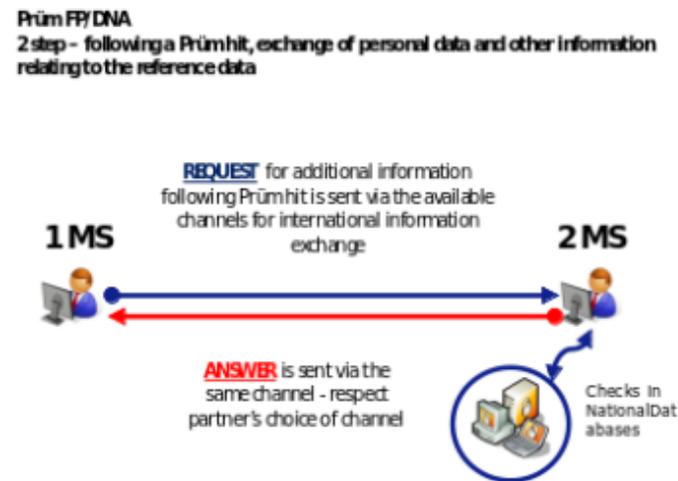
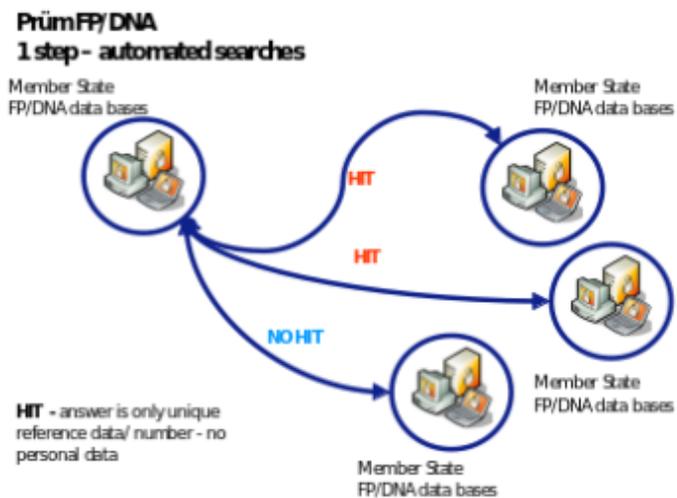
**First step** – automated exchange among databases of MS – the result is a hit/no hit and it contains only unique reference data/number without any information immediately identifying the person (data subject).

**Second step** – following a Prüm hit, personal data and other information relating to the reference data is requested via the available channels for international information exchange

Request – provide the unique AFIS/DNA reference number, names of the person whose FP/DNA are recorded (if known), date of police registration and for what crime or where the FP/DNA were taken (if the person is unknown) and which information you request.

Processing of the request - on the base of the provided reference data, check the relevant data base (for DNA or FP) for retrieving personal data: names of the person whose FP/DNA are recorded under this reference number and then check other available databases in order to provide additional information such as date/place of birth, picture, address, valid ID documents, criminal and judicial records, wanted status and all other requested information.

Send the answer with all collected information via the same channel on which the request was received (The rule is to respect your partner's choice of channel). Send a copy of the answer to other concerned countries – when a HIT occurred amongst three or more countries. Respect the requirements of the used channel.



### Exchange of VRD – EUCARIS Prüm application

Operational Member States have direct access to EUCARIS Prüm application and the duly authorised officers could perform checks in order to establish owner/holder of a vehicle ascertained in the framework of criminal case. The checks are made on licence plate number (specifying MS) or VIN (in all MS).

**2.5. Council Framework Decision 2006/960/JHA** on simplifying the exchange of information and intelligence between law enforcement authorities of the Member States of the European Union (**Swedish initiative/Swedish Framework Decision**)

Requirement for requesting information under CFD 2006/960/JHA - to have reasons for believing that information is in the requested MS

Time limits for replying

- **8 hours** - for **urgent cases** and if the requested information is held in a database directly accessible by a law enforcement authority. If there is going to be a delay, the requested MS shall immediately inform the requesting law enforcement authority of this postponement and shall provide the requested information or intelligence as soon as possible, but not later than within 3 days.
- **7 days** – for **non-urgent cases** and if the requested information is held in a database directly accessible by a law enforcement authority
- **14 days** - in all other cases

The **rule**, in all cases where the requested MS is unable to respond within the requested time limits, is to provide reasons.

Sharing information with Europol and Eurojust – art.6, para 2 – when the exchange of information refers to an offence or criminal activity within their mandate.

Spontaneous exchange of information – art.7

The competent law enforcement authorities shall, without any prior request being necessary, provide to the competent law enforcement authorities of other Member States information and intelligence in cases where there are factual reasons to believe that the information and intelligence could assist in the detection, prevention or investigation of offences. The modalities of such spontaneous exchange shall be regulated by the national law of the Member States providing the information.

Channel - exchange of information may take place via any existing channels for international law enforcement cooperation. The language used for the request and the exchange of information shall be the one applicable for the channel used and requirements of the used channel should be respected.