EUROPEAN UNION
THE COUNCIL

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NOTE

from: the Presidency

~~to : False Documents Working Party~~

Subject: Computerized image archiving and transmission system

Further to the meeting of K.4 Committee held on 5-6 October 1998, Delegations will find attached a revised version of the mission report, as well as a statement showing the financial impact of the draft computerized image archiving and transmission system.

EUROPEAN COMPUTERIZED ARCHIVING SYSTEM

The three Member States (United Kingdom, Netherlands and France) that already have a computerized document archiving system received a visit from a delegation of representatives from Ireland, Austria, Portugal, the Commission and the General Secretariat of the Council. Each Member State was able to demonstrate the existing functions of its system.

It is evident that each system has been well developed and seems to fulfil the needs of the Member State for which it was set up. The three systems have the following features: the images are in a standard computer format (this will help with the exchange, once the exchange format has been clearly defined), and each image normally has an associated text (the "text" format is a standard one). Both can easily be transmitted to other systems.

There are currently 2 groups of countries within the 15 Member States:

Group 1 – Member States which have computerized archiving systems for the visualization of travel documents (D/F/NL and the UK). These Member States already have an existing system, final test system, prototype or system in development.

Group 2 (the majority) – Member States which do not, at present, have computerized archiving systems.

The General Secretariat of the Council can propose a computerized solution for both groups of Member States.

1. Description of the system

The General Secretariat of the Council would create a *secure network* between the 15 Member States and the General Secretariat of the Council (leased lines for example).

The proposed name for the European system is *FADO* (*F*alse and *A*uthentic *Do*cuments).

OBJECTIVE 1:

– Creation of a computerized system, based in Brussels (within the General Secretariat of the Council), which would contain genuine documents, together with false and forged documents. The system could be read from ONE central point located in each Member State.

– The system will be based on the Internet technology. This technology allows a user to find documents easily from the central point in each Member State. Furthermore, it would allow for the inclusion of new documents in the system by the General Secretariat of the Council which could then be used immediately by the 15 Member States (without having to wait for an update by CD-ROM, which would be much slower).

– The system will be multilingual.

– The system will be based on a very strict codification (country, document type, document model, etc.). The codification will prove useful when documents are sent to the existing systems in Group 1.

– Within a Member State, the system can be read through a *secure internet* from a central point. A Member State can use the same system internally on its territory (that means connecting different stations at its various border control posts or other competent authorities). There will be NO DIRECT LINK between a border workstation and the system installed in Brussels. A method will exist to duplicate and update the system located in the Member States from the FADO system (tape, removable discs, CD-ROM etc...).

The main reason for this procedure is to ensure the security of the connection between the FADO system in Brussels and the 15 Member States. As established in ASIM 83, each Member State is free to develop its own national secure system for internal data transmission.

– **The system will work in a network between the system based in Brussels and the central points located in each country. It will allow a fast information exchange between all the countries and the system based in Brussels.**

– **As documents will be sent electronically (so they may be put in the existing national systems - D, F, NL, UK ...), the format used for the images should be a standard one (JPEG, TIFF, BMP ...). The image quality should be the best one possible. There must be a good compromise between the image quality, the size and the compression.**

– **Zoomed images will be available, but only for the important parts of the image and if it is useful and necessary.**

– **The system would allow a comparison on the screen between the original document and a false or forged document.**

– **It has been specifically asked that the system gives explanation on different falsification techniques and on security techniques.**

– **Crossed references will be useful for the users to find the information very quickly.**

– **As images and text will be bound together following a strict codification, it is necessary that the member states have that codification, so that they can use these information to introduce the new information in their own national system.**

– **The system should use standards as**
  - **Windows 95/98 NT 4 as operating system.**
  - **Images in JPEG, TIFF or BMP format with the best quality as possible.**
  - **A database compatible with others (for ex. Oracle 7, Informix, MS-Access ...)**
  - **standard network.**
  - **ASCII text files.**

– **The Member States have asked to put the priority on the documents form the UE countries as well from the countries where UE states have regular immigration.**

– For the Member States belonging to Group 2, the equipment required for the national central point is standard:
  - a relatively fast PC (easily found on the market today)
  - a graphical screen card allowing multiple colours simultaneously
  - a card allowing connection to the secure network between Brussels and the central point
  - a removable disc.

OBJECTIVE 2:

Transmission of new documents (genuine, false and forged) to all the Member States (whether belonging to Group 1 or Group 2).

– This system will use a "mail-box". The General Secretariat of the Council will place in each Member State's "mail-box" the computerized pictures of the new documents as well as the explanatory description in text format.

  For the Member States belonging to Group 1, the documents will be received from the "mail-box" and these Member States will then add them to their existing system for national purposes only.

  For the Member States belonging to Group 2, these documents can be taken from the FADO system (at the central point in the Member State) and they will be able to add them, using a specific program, to their national copy of the FADO system (an automatic method will be used in that case). There will be some physical manipulation required to transfer these data from the Brussels-connected system to the national system because, for security reasons as described above, there is no physical link between these two systems.

OBJECTIVE 3:

Introduction of documents (genuine, false or forged) FROM the Member States INTO the FADO system.

– If the documents are coming from a Member State belonging to Group 1, the Member State will have all the necessary equipment to digitize the documents. These documents (with the associated text) can either be:

  • put into the "mail-box" and sent to the General Secretariat of the Council, which would include them immediately in FADO and transmit these new documents to each Member State's "mail-box". They are then accessible to all Member States;

  • or added DIRECTLY to FADO in a specific zone named "New documents, not yet approved by the Editorial Board". The advantage of such a procedure is that a genuine, false or forged document can be seen very quickly by all Member States (without waiting for a meeting of the "Editorial Board"). Even if the information has not yet been verified (image quality, correspondence of the text, text translation, double information etc.), each Member State will be aware of any problem which might exist.

– If the documents are coming from a Member State belonging to Group 2, that Member State might already have the equipment to digitize documents (in this case, see previous example). If not, Member States are asked to send, to the General Secretariat of the Council, the following (which, for image quality, are set out in order of preference):
  • original documents
  • slides
  • photographs and negatives.

  The General Secretariat of the Council would then immediately initiate the technical operations necessary to introduce these new data into the FADO system and then transmit the new data to the different Member States through their "mail-box" facility (see above).

2. Comparison with the criteria laid down in ASIM 83

The FADO system must fulfil the requirements described in ASIM 83.

The computerized image archiving system would be accessible to the central point in each Member State. They will then be able to disseminate the information, as appropriate, to border officials or other competent authorities.

Yes. A central point can read the information and an "update procedure" (to keep the system up-to-date in each Member State) will be carried out.

It is essential to guarantee the security of the information contained in the computerized system.

Yes. The system will use special data lines between the General Secretariat of the Council and the central points located in the Member States.

It is of paramount importance to ensure that the information can be transmitted quickly to the national central points.

As soon as the information has been given to the General Secretariat of the Council, it will be introduced as quickly as possible into the FADO system and the "mail-boxes". Each Member State is responsible for adding these data to its own national system or copy of the FADO system.

The system must be "user-friendly".

Yes. The Internet technology allows for the creation of an application which will be easy to use.

The system should introduce a "flash" which would entail sending a warning to all Member States about a particular false document via E-mail.

Yes. When the information is available at the General Secretariat of the Council, that information can be added to a "non-verified" flash zone, accessible by the central point of each Member State.

The possibility of developing an additional level of query in order to include more detailed information for experts, should be borne in mind from the outset.

Yes, the system will have more than one level from the outset. It is for the Member State to decide the level of each contribution.

The system must include genuine documents as well as false and forged documents with their description and the falsification and security techniques used.

Yes. It is technically and visually possible for the user to have, on the same screen, an example of the genuine part and the various existing false parts.

3. Other

In order to start the project quickly, the same priority can be given to the introduction of genuine documents from all Member States and the false and forged documents most commonly used. The information in the system would then be extended and updated to include all other documents, making it as complete as possible.

– Genuine Documents from all Member States

  The General Secretariat of the Council has slides and text from the Handbook of Genuine Documents.

– False Documents

  It is for the Editorial Board to ask Member States to send either original documents, slides or photographs and negatives of the most commonly used forgeries that are to be found in the Fraud Bulletin.

– Other Documents

  The cooperation of the Member States that have digitized documents will be essential.

4. **Equipment**

In order to create such a centralized system the General Secretariat of the Council would need to have the following equipment (non-exhaustive list)

– 1 computer (PC or Macintosh) with 64 Mb RAM, 4Gb disk, 20" display, back-up system, removable disc;
– 1 flatbed quality scanner;
– 1 quality digital camera (table-installed with ultra-violet light);
– 1 computer working as Web Server (secure Internet) with a back-up system;
– connections to the 15 Member States;
– 1 PC with removable disk simulating the workstation installed at the central point in the 15 Member States (useful for preparing the up-dates by "mail-box");
– 1 PC with removable disk simulating the national workstations (without direct connection to the system based in Brussels) (useful for preparing the up-dates by "mail-box").

FINANCIAL IMPACT

1. *Cost of the operation at the central point in Brussels*

. Equipment:
Scanner, digital camera, UV lights, to digitize documents.
Server at the Intranet site, backup, colour printer, etc. ± ECU 100.000

. Human resources in the Information Technology Division of the Council General Secretariat:

(a) First year (3 persons; consultants on fixed-term contracts)
Start-up: site creation, site design, programming, document digitization; help with the installation and management of central points in the Member States ± ECU 300.000

(b) Following year (management)
Maintenance: Monitoring of work and updating of the system ± ECU 100.000

2. *Cost of the operation in the Member States*

. Equipment:
Computer, modems, etc. ± ECU 7.000

Optional: quality colour printer ± ECU 2.500

3. *Savings*:

1. Urgent messages by carrier from Brussels to the different capitals.

2. Handbook of Genuine Documents, the cost of which for 1997 is ± ECU 165.000.

3. Colour photocopies: savings of ± 12.000 photocopies and the cost of machine rental.

4. Fraud Bulletin filing system.

5. Human resources currently allocated to the Fraud Bulletin and the Handbook of Genuine Documents.

6. Several days of meetings of the False Documents Working Party (Drafting Committee) could be saved every year.