



EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

Panel on Migration and Asylum

Expert Meeting on Information and Communication Technology Use in Migration Management

Riga, Latvia
27-28 October 2016

CONCEPT NOTE

Europe is a mobile society. Millions of EU citizens and third-country nationals cross internal and external borders every day. For example, in 2015, more than 50 million non-EU nationals visited the EU, accounting for more than 200 million border crossings at the external borders of the Schengen area. Beyond these regular travel flows, in 2015 alone, conflicts and crises elsewhere triggered 1.8 million irregular border crossings at Europe's external borders¹.

As different migration channels are increasingly used for different reasons, it becomes more and more significant for all the countries concerned to introduce, sustain and develop strategies for sound management of migratory flows, including smart border management. In addition, also security considerations as one of the aspects of the complex phenomena of migration must be born in mind and dealt with accordingly. In this context, information and communication technology (ICT) plays a significant role in facilitating sound migration management.

There are a number of information systems at EU level that provide immigration officials, border guards and police officers with relevant information on persons. Also in the EU Member States and the Eastern Partnership countries there are established information systems used to provide support for migration management. However, there often are persistent shortcomings in the feeding of the relevant databases and the exchange of information – gaps in the architecture of data management, a complex landscape of differently governed information

¹ [Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council *Stronger and Smarter Information Systems for Borders and Security*, 6.4.2016 COM\(2016\) 205 final.](#)



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systems, a fragmented architecture of data management for border control and security.

It makes sense that where necessary and feasible, the information systems are interconnected and interoperable. Simultaneous searches of systems should be facilitated, to ensure that all relevant information is available for smart and effective use of data in order to gain the maximum effect possible. This makes even more relevant to have a cooperation and exchange of good practices, where possible.

During the [Panel meeting on Migration Data Management and Migration Trends](#) last year (Budapest, 5-6 March, 2015) various migration data issues were discussed between the EU Member States, Eastern Partnership countries, academia, civil society and international organizations. The meeting showed the importance of the availability of reliable and comparable migration and asylum data to ensure overall understanding of migration dynamics and thus allowing for timely policy response.

As a follow up to the Budapest meeting, the aim of this expert meeting is to provide the participants with the opportunity to discuss the current approach to the information and communication technology for better migration management, to share their national practices and exchange experience with experts from partner countries dealing with similar issues and finally contemplate new, even groundbreaking, solutions that may influence the way we use ICT in migration management.

The meeting will focus on three topics:

- ICT in migration management. This session will provide general overview of the ICT usage in the sphere of migration, including why, where and how the technology is used, challenges associated with it (e.g. interoperability of ICT systems, data protection), and benefits brought by it. It will also look at challenges linked to the current migration crisis and ICT solutions applied in this context;
- national systems of the Eastern Partnership countries and EU Member States - from the idea to the working system. In this session the EU and EaP countries will present their national ICT systems used for different aspects of migration management, covering their life-cycle, such as the reasons and ideas that were behind the initial development of a system, planning, financing, management, training of employees, everyday functioning, assessment and further development;

- innovative ICT solutions in the field of migration. During this session the focus will be on the new ideas and concepts within the area, various examples of already functioning, as well as planned innovative ICT solutions, including border management systems currently being prepared by the EU and their potential impact on the EaP countries. We will look in particular at the envisaged *EU Entry/Exit System* (EES) and the planned *EU Travel Information and Authorisation System* (ETIAS).

A study visit will be arranged in the margins of the expert meeting to provide the participants with the possibility to get practical insight into the functionality of information systems used for better migration management in the host country.

Expert meeting will bring together experts on information and communication technology within the domain of migration from the EU and EaP countries, EU institutions and agencies, international organizations and others to exchange experience and best practices on effective use of ICT solutions for better migration management.