D7.4 – End User Workshop 3, Best practices in Border Control Staff & training - Summary


In addition to consortium members (CEIS, VTT, UIC, Atos, Thales), 18 European border management practitioners stemming from national authorities of 7 Member States attended this event. The European Border and Coast Guard Agency - Frontex, the United States Department of Homeland Security, the World Customs Organisation and the Euroint Forum were represented as well.

During this event two types of presentations were given: presentations of the key results of the BODEGA project by VTT, CEIS and UIC and presentations by end user organisations, which do not belong to the BODEGA consortium (Frontex, the Department of Homeland Security and the Royal Dutch Maréchaussée).

Each presentation led to thorough exchanges with the audience and allowed the consortium for gathering valuable inputs to inform the next steps of the research. Also, two technology demonstrations were organised during the coffee breaks: on the first day Atos presented a mobile device compatible with the upcoming EU Stronger and Smarter Border Legislation and on the second day Thales demonstrated a mobile device made for the capture of biometrics data.

Finally, a session was dedicated to get end users’ comments in a structured manner – in particular regarding the impact of emerging technologies on the work and training of Border Guards through a questionnaire. A second questionnaire allowed the participants to provide their feedback on the content and organisation of the workshop. Their overall experience proved very positive considering that the average grade for content is 3.93 out of 5 and the organisation was rated 4.53 out of 5.

In terms of results, the key discussed ideas could be summarised as follows:

- **Digital Transformation** is and will continue to impact the work (and training) of European Border Guards
- Digital Transformation goes beyond the use of new technology, it implies **new ways of working and thinking**
- **Humans remain at the core of border control**, some tasks cannot be completed by machines (behavioural analysis, detection of imposters)
- **Machines** are very useful to complete some tasks (documents authentication) and to parallelize the work, they nonetheless **have limitations**, which should be taken into account when deploying them - they cannot for instance detect if a traveller is using a fraudulently-obtained genuine document
- From a US perspective border management is an **integrated activity** combining intelligence, border control and behavioural analysis, and the **control starts way before the actual border crossing**
• **Mobile devices** are generally considered to bring **added-value** to the work of Border Guards, although some issues remain to be solved (faster devices, improved battery performance, devices able to withstand harsh conditions)

• Some “**out of the box**” **thinking** would be needed to imagine new ways of performing border control with new technologies (**e-passport, e-visa**)

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