

2nd OSCE-wide Seminar on Passenger Data Exchange 1-2 November 2018, Hofburg, Vienna

CONCEPT NOTE

Prompted by an increased risk of returning foreign terrorist fighters (FTFs) following the loss of territory by terrorist groups in conflict zones, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) adopted in December 2017 its [Resolution 2396](#), which builds upon previous resolutions [2178](#) (2014) and [2309](#) (2016) and obliges States: (i) to collect Advance Passenger Information (API) and Passenger Name Record (PNR) data; (ii) to develop systems to collect biometric data; and (iii) to share this information bilaterally and multilaterally including by using databases such as those of INTERPOL.

The value of passenger data exchange systems, in particular API, for enhancing border management and detecting and preventing the movement of FTFs, has repeatedly been emphasized by the international community. In December 2016, OSCE participating States adopted [Decision 6/16 on Enhancing the Use of API](#), which stipulates that States will establish national API systems in alignment with existing international standards and seek to automatically cross-check the data against watch lists. Supporting participating States in implementing Decision 6/16 was the primary goal of last year's OSCE-wide Seminar on Passenger Data Exchange, which took place from 28 to 29 September 2017 in Vienna.

However, new developments have taken place in recent months. Since 23 February 2018, the setting up of national API systems is an International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standard, which makes it mandatory for all Contracting States to the Chicago Convention. In addition, 2396 is the first UNSC Resolution that calls upon States to collect, process and analyse Passenger Name Record (PNR) data.

The collection of biometric data, including fingerprints, photographs and the use of facial recognition, is also an international obligation included in Resolution 2396 in order to properly identify terrorists. But due to the transnational nature of this threat, sharing this information with other States is as important as collecting it. This is the reason why 2396 mandates States to share PNR and biometric data responsibly with each other, as well as with INTERPOL and other relevant international bodies.

Compliance with all these commitments is a massive undertaking and some States might face challenges due to limited capacity and resources, which means that certain provisions may take years to achieve. International and regional organizations like the OSCE can play an important role in providing technical assistance and capacity-building to States in order to assist them in the implementation of passenger data solutions and systems for the collection of biometric information.

The main purpose of the 2nd OSCE-wide Seminar on Passenger Data Exchange is to help States better understand the international obligations related to border management included in Resolution 2396, to identify their technical assistance needs and challenges, and to determine ways in which the OSCE can support them in fulfilling their obligations.

Therefore, this OSCE-wide Seminar will focus on four main topics:

1. Overview of passenger data: what are API and PNR and how to set up a passenger data exchange system?

2. National experiences in establishing passenger data exchange systems – lessons learned and best practices;
3. Biometric technology and identity management: overview of current counter-terrorism biometric systems, its benefits and human rights implications.
4. The importance of information-sharing at the national and the international levels: connecting to watch lists and populating databases.

Expected Results	
For States not using API/PNR/biometric technology	For States already using API/PNR/biometric technology
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Obtain information on the benefits of API/PNR/biometric systems, and how to establish them in line with international standards and respecting data privacy; 2. Utilise the lessons learned of neighbouring States and build networks for future information exchange; 3. Examine the possibilities offered by commercial IT service providers; 4. Initiate connections with potential donor organizations and States. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Share best practices in implementing an API/PNR/biometric systems; 2. Identify potential partnerships with other States and international organizations to improve the efficiency or minimize the costs of their current systems; 3. Make contacts with commercial IT service providers offering additional analytical capabilities 4. Improve existing interactions with airlines and other private stakeholders.

The suggested level of participants for this event is expert-level officials who either will be or have been involved in the establishment of national API/PNR/biometric systems. Representatives from national targeting centres and/or Passenger Information Units (PIU) are also invited to participate. It is expected that participants will be able to engage in discussion and debate on good practices and lessons learnt in implementing and using API/PNR/biometric technology.

Target Audience	
For States not using API/PNR/biometric technology	For States already using API/PNR/biometric technology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-makers who will be involved in the establishment of national API/PNR/biometric systems (Border Police, Customs, Intelligence services, IT Development, Immigration, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officials who were involved in the establishment of the existing systems (Border Police, Immigration, IT, etc.); • Representatives from the national targeting centre or PIU

TNTD will also invite experts from the Biometrics Institute, European Union, the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), INTERPOL, the UN, and others, as well as airlines and IT service providers engaged in implementing passenger data exchange solutions.