

SLOVENIA

With reference to the Informal videoconference of the members of the LEWP on 22. 2. 2021, the point 8: Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council amending Regulation (EU) 2016/794, as regards Europol's cooperation with private parties, the processing of personal data by Europol in support of criminal investigations, and Europol's role on research and innovation - General discussion regarding block 4: enabling Europol to enter data into the Schengen Information System, please find bellow the position of Republic of Slovenia.

Answers to your questions:

1. *Do you agree that there is an operational need to make verified third-country sourced information on terrorists and other criminals available to frontline officers (border guards and police officers) in order to detect those persons when they seek to cross EU external borders or when they are being checked within the EU?*

YES

2. *If so, do you agree that the Schengen Information System is the right tool to make this information available to frontline officers (border guards and police officers)? If not, what alternative solution would you propose?*

YES

Also, please find bellow the comment of Slovenia expressed at the last LEWP meeting on 22. 2. 2021:

Slovenia supports the Proposal since a gap in the access to information provided to Europol by third countries has been identified and considers that the solutions put forward in the Regulation adequately address the identified gap and ensure an effective functioning of law enforcement authorities.

Slovenia assesses the Proposal as necessary since it gives an active role to Europol, through which Europol will be able to fill the gap related to entries into the SIS in cases, when MS are not able to enter the alert themselves, and what is more, with Europol SIS alerts we will be able to prevent an undetected entry / travel of persons posing a threat to the internal security of the EU.

SIS represents the most effective possibility for alerts to be in real-time at disposal to all end-users and we are of the opinion that it is of utter importance for Europol to have the possibility to enter information alerts into the system in cases linked to terrorism and forms of crime, which affect a common interest covered by a Union policy.

We believe that, in relation to the entry of Europol SIS alerts, appropriate safeguards have been built in and we support prior consultation, involving the sharing of information on the person concerned with MS.

Access to INTERPOL databases via FIND system is very important for us but we think that this can't be seen as an alternative to the proposed system.

In particular this is very important for us since Slovenia is a transit country and an area of all types of flows, both legal as well as illegal, situated on the Balkan route which is one of the most important entry points for illegal migration to the EU. We believe that with Europol SIS information alerts, we could enhance EU response to threats and make an important added value to the security of the entire EU, especially of those MS that are most at risk in relation to terrorist criminal offences.

We realize that this will give Europol additional tasks and competencies and will also represent the increase of work of frontline police officers and SIRENE Bureaus in particular, but we will »gladly accept« this since we strongly believe that this will result in a significant increase in the security of all EU citizens.

Security of our citizens is our primary concern and we strongly believe that there is no efficient alternative to this proposal!